The Venus of Paphos and her Temple

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Dissertation attached to the notes of Volume 4 of The Complete Works of Tacitus, by J.-L. Burnouf, Professor at the Royal College of France

Classical Bookshop of L. Hachette, Alumnus of the former École Normale
No. 12 Pierre-Sarrazin Street

and at Treuttel and Würtz, Booksellers, No. 17 Bourbon Street

Paris, 1827

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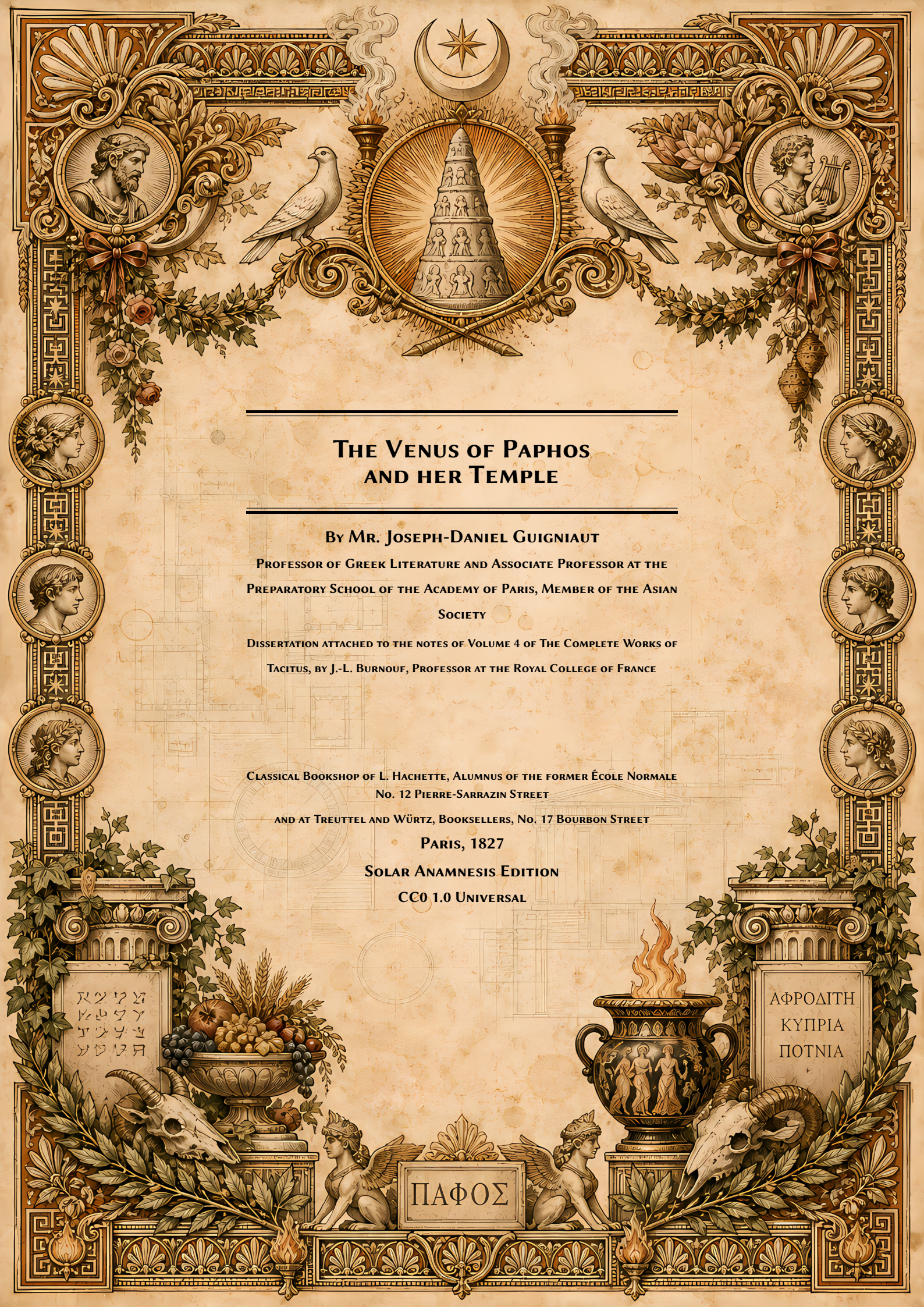

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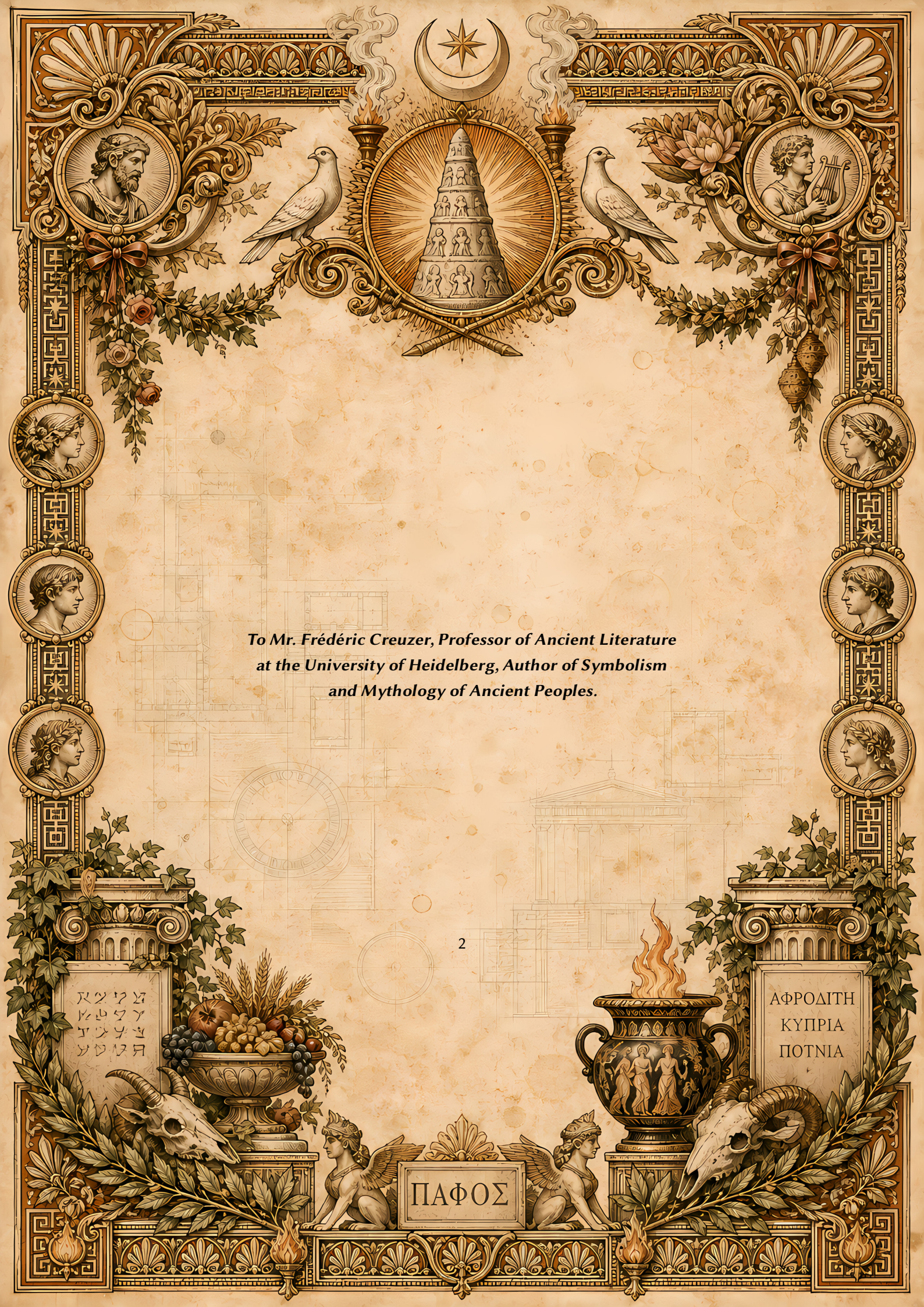
To Mr. Frédéric Creuzer, Professor of Ancient Literature at the University of Heidelberg, Author of Symbolism and Mythology of Ancient Peoples.



Preface

We wanted to make this short dissertation a modest, though rather weak, double homage of gratitude to the skillful master whose ingenious methods and admirable examples guided our first steps into the vestibule of antiquity; and to the profound savant whose laborious revelations and fruitful inspirations opened the sanctuary for us. At the same time, it will serve as a prelude to several pieces of the same genre, which will accompany the forthcoming volumes of *Tacitus* by Mr. Burnouf, and to the fairly imminent publication of the second installment of *Religions of Antiquity*, after Mr. Creuzer, which will include, not only the religions of Western Asia, but also the origins and the entire national and popular portion of the religions of ancient Greece and Italy.

Tacitus, on the eve of that great religious revolution that would elevate a single God and a single cult from the *débris* of so many gods and diverse cults, seems to gather, with a curious presentiment, whenever the oppor-

tunity presents itself, the scattered titles of those ancient temples that were threatened by a common ruin. Describing, at the beginning of the second book of the Histories (chapters 2-4), the return of Titus to Judea, to his father Vespasian, he shows us this prince visiting on the island of Cyprus, the temple of Venus of Paphos, celebrated among both natives and foreigners.

"I will make, he says, a brief digression on the origin of this cult, the establishment of the temple, and the form of the goddess, who is represented nowhere in this way. According to the oldest tradition, the founder of the temple was King Aérias; a name that some claim, on the contrary, belongs to the goddess herself. A more modern opinion holds that the temple was consecrated by Cinyras, on the very spot where Venus came ashore after the sea had birthed her. It is added that the knowledge of the haruspices and the secrets of that art came from abroad, brought by the Cilician Tamiras, and that it was decreed that the descendants of these two families would jointly preside over all the duties of the cult. Soon, so that the

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royal house might retain its preeminence over any foreign lineage, the newcomers renounced the science they had brought, and the priest consulted to this day is always a descendant of Cinyras. Every victim is accepted, provided it is male. The entrails of kid goats are trusted the most. It is forbidden to spill blood on the altars; prayers and a pure fire are all that are offered there, and although performed outdoors, the rain has never wet them. The goddess is not depicted in human form: she is a circular block that rises into a cone, diminishing gradually from the base to the summit. The reason for this form is unknown."

"After having contemplated the riches of the temple, the offerings of the kings, and all these antiquities that the Greeks' vanity traces back to unknown ages, Titus, etc."

(*Translation of Mr. Burnouf.*)

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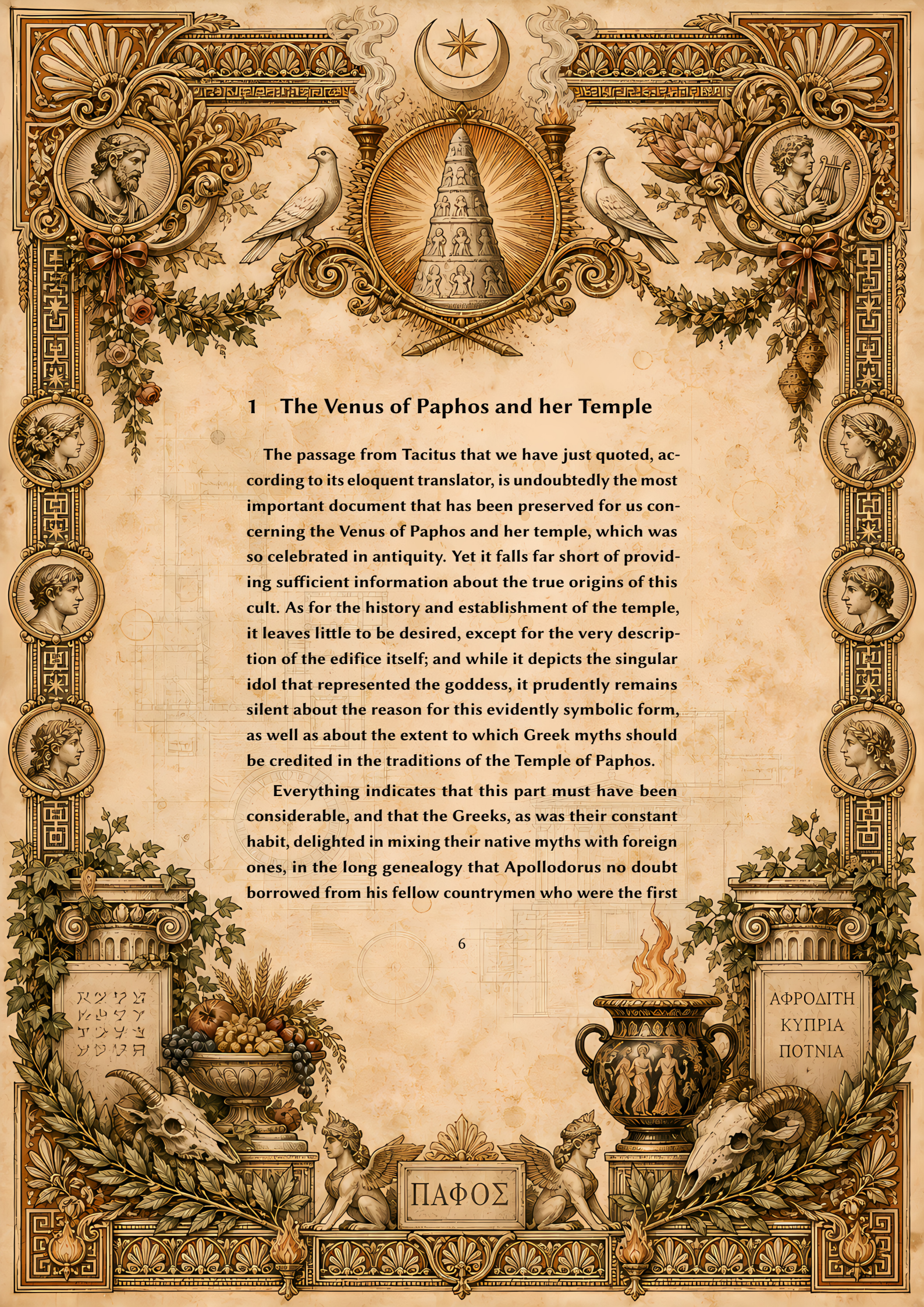
1 The Venus of Paphos and her Temple

The passage from Tacitus that we have just quoted, according to its eloquent translator, is undoubtedly the most important document that has been preserved for us concerning the Venus of Paphos and her temple, which was so celebrated in antiquity. Yet it falls far short of providing sufficient information about the true origins of this cult. As for the history and establishment of the temple, it leaves little to be desired, except for the very description of the edifice itself; and while it depicts the singular idol that represented the goddess, it prudently remains silent about the reason for this evidently symbolic form, as well as about the extent to which Greek myths should be credited in the traditions of the Temple of Paphos.

Everything indicates that this part must have been considerable, and that the Greeks, as was their constant habit, delighted in mixing their native myths with foreign ones, in the long genealogy that Apollodorus no doubt borrowed from his fellow countrymen who were the first



to write about the island of Cyprus.[1] In it we see *Cinyras*, a sixth-generation descendant of Aurora and Cephalus, son of Herse and grandson of Cecrops, the first king of Attica. Here the work of the Athenian colonists and others, founders of several cities in Cyprus after the sack of Troy, becomes clearly revealed. By such a blending of traditions, the famous Evagoras, king of Salamis, traced his lineage on one side to Teucer, son of Telamon, and on the other side to Cinyras, through the headman of one of his daughters.[2] Tithonus, son of Aurora, appears in the aforementioned genealogy, and his spouse in all the others, Phaëthon and Astynoüs, who later emerge and seem to take the place of Memnon, or remind one of him, account for the Ethiopian origin, which Herodotus attributes to one branch of the Cypriot population, according to the accounts of the Cypriots themselves, perhaps still echoing

[1] Apollod. Biblioth. 3, 14, p. 354, Heyn.; *add.* obss. p. 323 sqq.; *ejusd.* obss. ad Homer. Iliad. 11., 20, vol. 6., 118. *Confer.* Meursii Cyprus, 1., 1., Op. vol. 3., p. 550 sqq., Flor. 1744.

[2] Pausanias 1., 3. *Cf.* Isocrat. Evagor. Encom. c. 5 sqq., vol. 1., *ed.* Coray.

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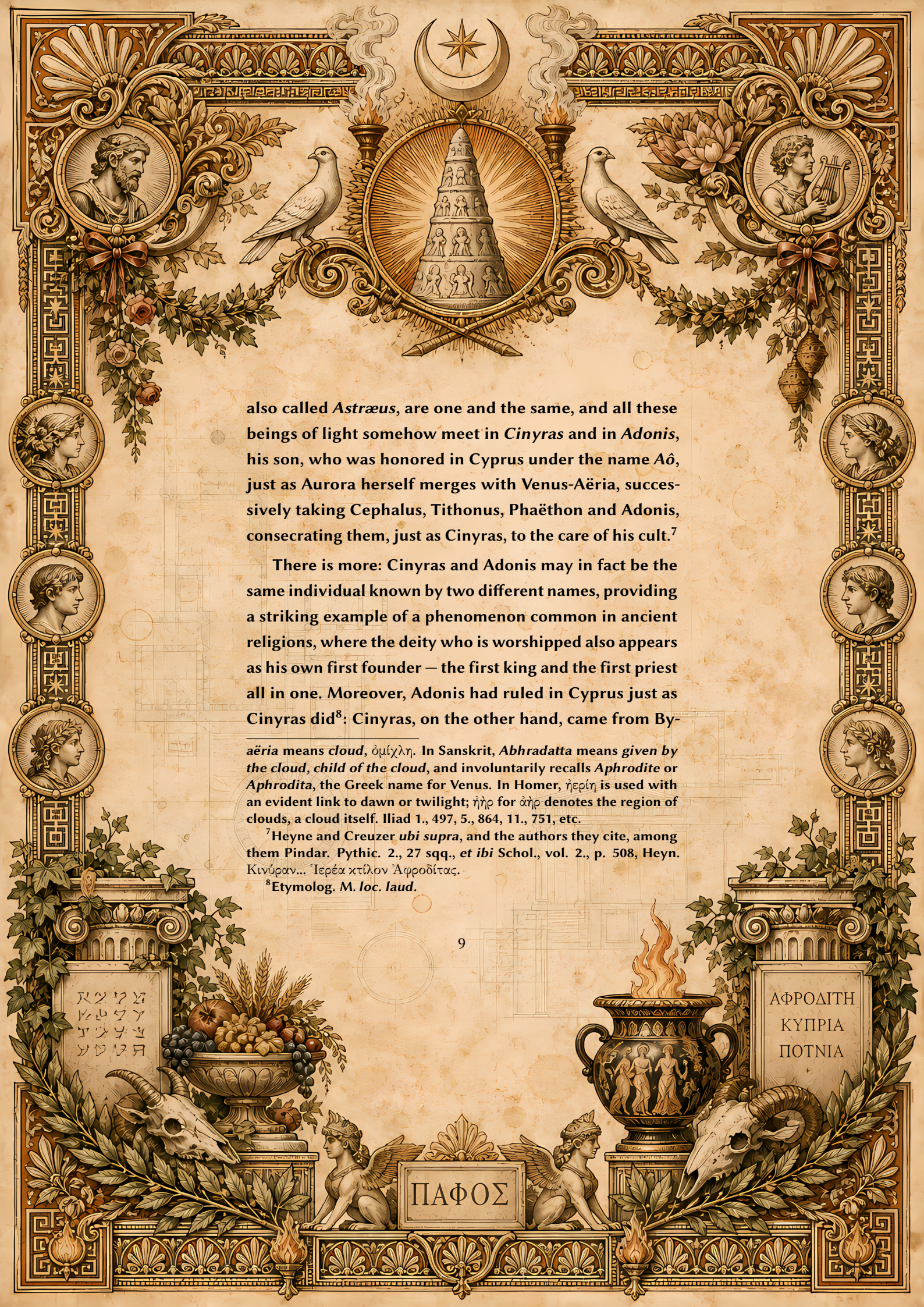
Greek legends here.[3] Perhaps under these names, as well as under *Aërias*, the first architect of the temple erected in honor of Venus at Paphos, which was the oldest of all the island's temples according to the tradition recorded elsewhere by Tacitus,[4] lie ancient and primitive connections with Egypt, originally called *Aëria* by some.[5] We think, however, that the name *Aërias* or *Aëria*, given by others to the very goddess of Paphos, naturally approaches the name *Aoüs*, the first king of the land, who is none other than Tithonus or Phaëthon, as formal testimonies tell us, and signifies *Child of Aurora*.[6] Thus Aërias and Tithonus,

[3] Herodot. 7., 90.

[4] Annal. 3., 62.

[5] This is the opinion of Creuzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie*, vol. 1., p. 341 sq. This name, moreover, was applied to many different places, Cyprus itself, Crete, the island of Thasos, Libya, Ethiopia, Sicily. Consequently, it is very difficult to draw any definite conclusion regarding the origin of these myths. *Confer.* A. Gell. 14., 6; Isidor. Orig. 9., 2; Hesych. *s. v.*

[6] Etymol. Magn. *voc.* Ἀῶος. *Confer.* Heyn. ad Apollodor. *ubi supra*; Religions of Antiquity, after Creuzer, vol. 1., part 1., p. 482, 485 sq. — Another connection, on which we do not wish to pass judgment here, is suggested by Hesychius. This lexicographer says that in Etolian



also called *Astræus*, are one and the same, and all these beings of light somehow meet in *Cinyras* and in *Adonis*, his son, who was honored in Cyprus under the name *Aô*, just as Aurora herself merges with Venus-Aëria, successively taking Cephalus, Tithonus, Phaëthon and Adonis, consecrating them, just as Cinyras, to the care of his cult.[7]

There is more: Cinyras and Adonis may in fact be the same individual known by two different names, providing a striking example of a phenomenon common in ancient religions, where the deity who is worshipped also appears as his own first founder — the first king and the first priest all in one. Moreover, Adonis had ruled in Cyprus just as Cinyras did[8]: Cinyras, on the other hand, came from By-

aëria means *cloud*, ὀμίχλη. In Sanskrit, *Abhradatta* means *given by the cloud, child of the cloud*, and involuntarily recalls *Aphrodite* or *Aphrodita*, the Greek name for Venus. In Homer, ἠερίη is used with an evident link to dawn or twilight; ἠὴρ for ἀὴρ denotes the region of clouds, a cloud itself. Iliad 1., 497, 5., 864, 11., 751, etc.

[7] Heyne and Creuzer *ubi supra*, and the authors they cite, among them Pindar. Pythic. 2., 27 sqq., *et ibi* Schol., vol. 2., p. 508, Heyn. Κινύραν... Ἱερέα κτίλον Ἀφροδίτας.

[8] Etymolog. M. *loc. laud.*

blos in Phoenicia, a city famed for the cult of Adonis (or Thammuz), a wholly Phœnician deity; he built a temple to Venus on Mount Lebanon, and according to the very genealogy we are discussing, it was from a daughter of Pygmalion, the Phœnician king, that he fathered Adonis.[9] Moreover, this figure was also called *Gingras*, after the mourning flute of Phoenicia and Caria; and the name *Cinyras* or *Cinyra*, already so close to *Gingras*, referred both to a musical instrument and to expressions of mourning and tears.[10] We should also note that Venus's ill-fated lover, Adonis, was known in Laconia as *Ciris* or *Cyris*, a designation that could be linked to the Greek word Κύριος and would then be an exact translation of the Phœnician *Adonaï* or *the Lord*, although this etymology may not provide a completely satisfactory explanation.[11] What is

[9] Strab. 16., p. 755, Casaub.; Lucian. de Dea Syria, c. 9; Apollodor. *I. I.*

[10] Pollux Onomast. 4., 10, 76; Hesych. 2., p. 264 sq. *ibique* Alberti. *Cf.* Phot. Lex. p. 123.

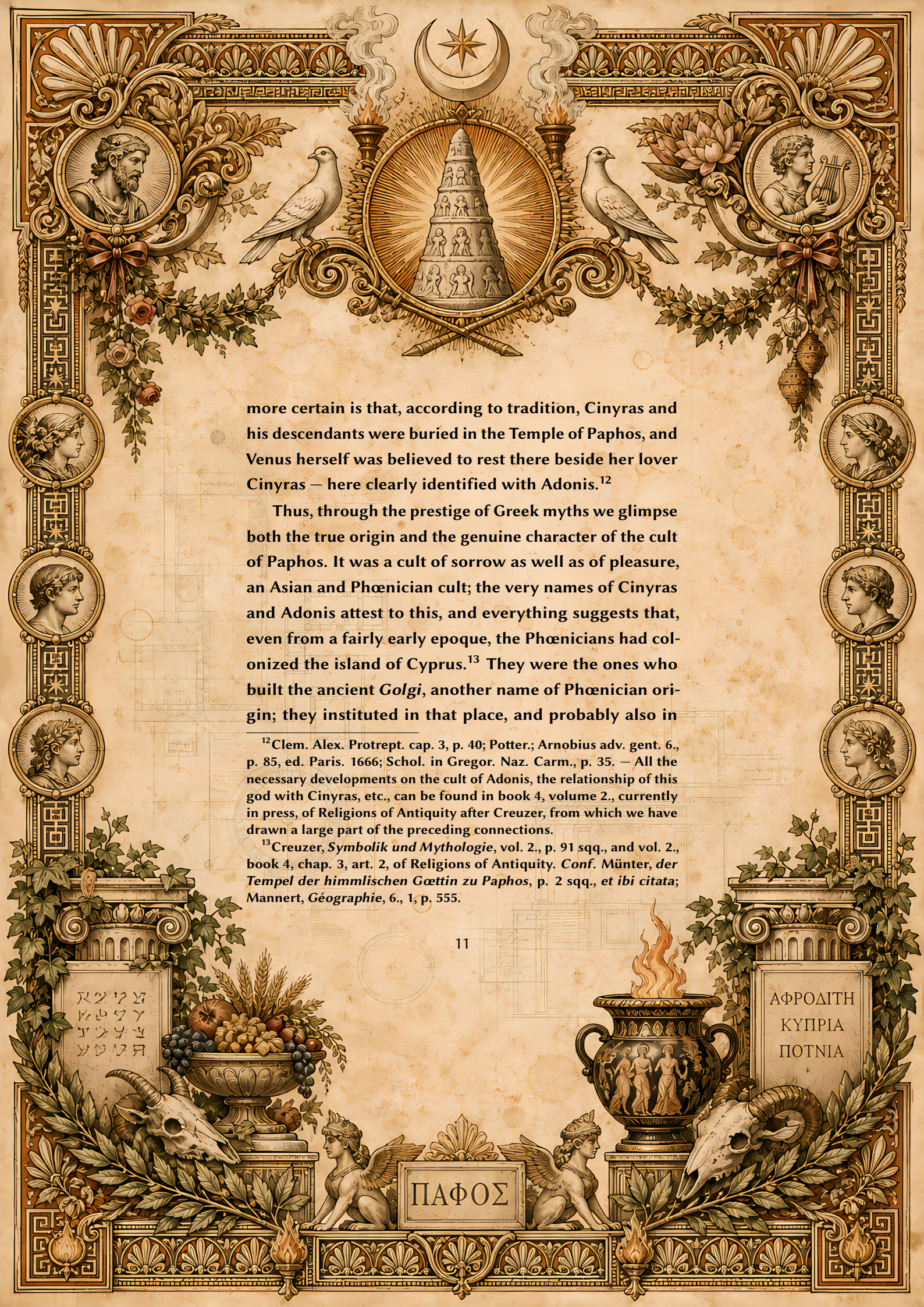
[11] Hesych. 2., p. 266, 387; Albert.; *conf.* Etymol. M. *s. v.* According to this latter authority, Κίρρις would be a specifically Cypriot word.

more certain is that, according to tradition, Cinyras and his descendants were buried in the Temple of Paphos, and Venus herself was believed to rest there beside her lover Cinyras — here clearly identified with Adonis.[12]

Thus, through the prestige of Greek myths we glimpse both the true origin and the genuine character of the cult of Paphos. It was a cult of sorrow as well as of pleasure, an Asian and Phœnician cult; the very names of Cinyras and Adonis attest to this, and everything suggests that, even from a fairly early epoque, the Phœnicians had colonized the island of Cyprus.[13] They were the ones who built the ancient *Golgi*, another name of Phœnician origin; they instituted in that place, and probably also in

[12] Clem. Alex. Protrept. cap. 3, p. 40; Potter.; Arnobius adv. gent. 6., p. 85, ed. Paris. 1666; Schol. in Gregor. Naz. Carm., p. 35. — All the necessary developments on the cult of Adonis, the relationship of this god with Cinyras, etc., can be found in book 4, volume 2., currently in press, of Religions of Antiquity after Creuzer, from which we have drawn a large part of the preceding connections.

[13] Creuzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie*, vol. 2., p. 91 sqq., and vol. 2., book 4, chap. 3, art. 2, of Religions of Antiquity. *Conf.* Münter, *der Tempel der himmlischen Gœttin zu Paphos*, p. 2 sqq., *et ibi citata*; Mannert, *Géographie*, 6., 1, p. 555.



ancient Paphos, the honors of Venus-Urania or Celestial Venus, long before the Arcadian Agapenor founded the new city of Paphos upon his return from the siege of Troy and decorated it with superb temples.[14] This Venus was the same deity worshipped under various names, Baaltis or Dione, Astarte, Semiramis, etc., in Byblos, Sidon, Ascalon, in short throughout Phoenicia and Syria, and she had definite connections with Babylonian Mylitta, Arab Alilat, Persian and Armenian Mithra and Anahita.[15] She was the great goddess of nature, considered in her celestial aspect, and more or less identified at times with the moon, at other times with the planet Venus, the morning star, the aurora [dawn]. According to Herodotus's testimony, based on that of the Cypriots themselves, she was brought from Ascalon to Cyprus, and the father of his-

[14] Pausan. 8., 5; Raoul-Rochette, Hist. de l'établissem. des colon. grecq., vol. 2., p. 391 sq. *Cf.* Strab. 14., p. 683; Münter, ouvr. c., p. 5, against Étienne de Byzance and those who try to "Greek-ify" the whole island of Cyprus from the beginning.

[15] *Voy.* the evidence and developments in Creuzer, *Symb. u. Myth.*, 1., p. 730 sqq.; 2., 24 sqq., 34, 61, 75, 84, 95, etc.; especially Relig. de l'Antiq., vol. 2., l. 4, chap. 3, *passim*. *Confer.* Münter, *ubi supra*.

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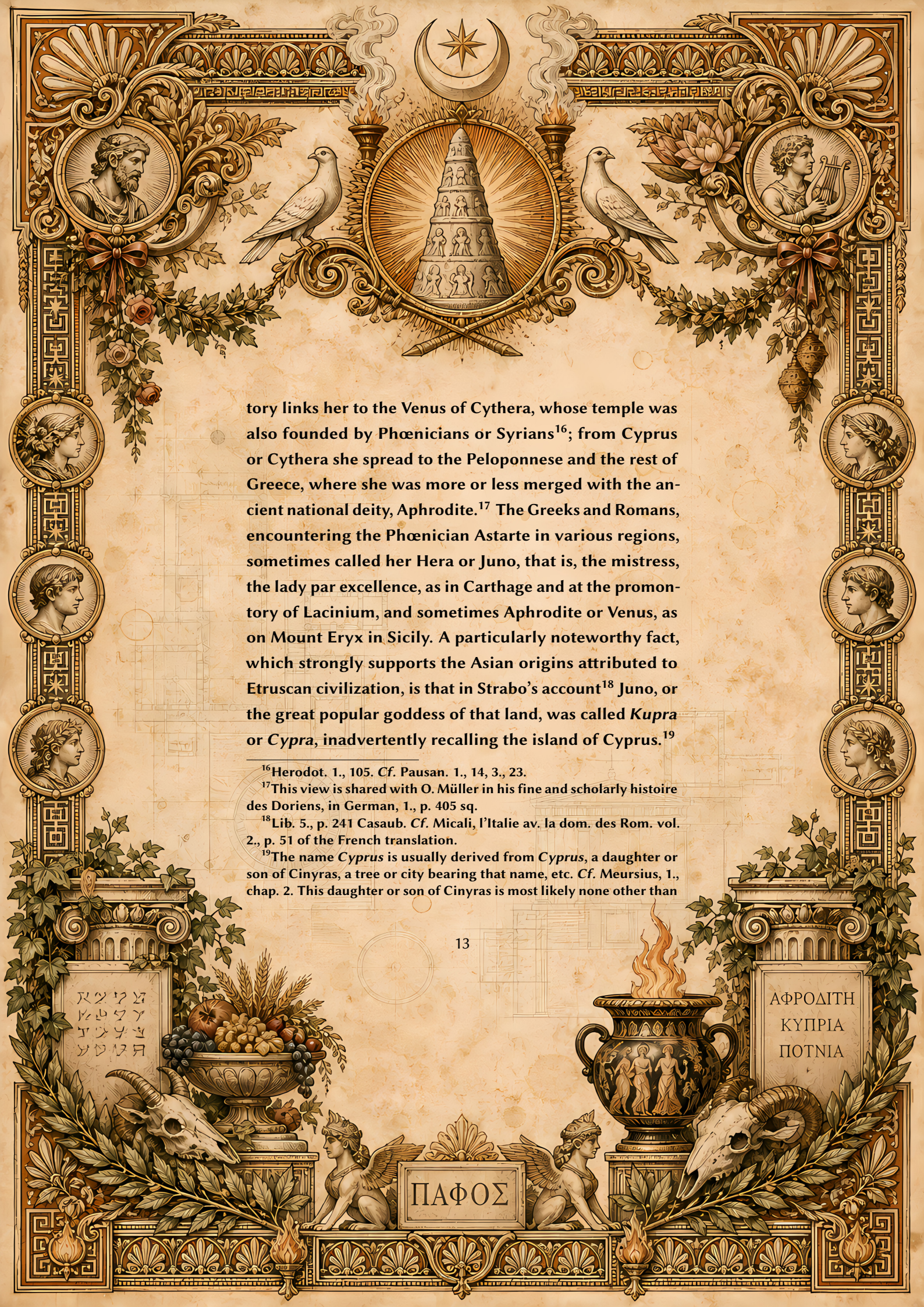
tory links her to the Venus of Cythera, whose temple was also founded by Phœnicians or Syrians[16]; from Cyprus or Cythera she spread to the Peloponnese and the rest of Greece, where she was more or less merged with the ancient national deity, Aphrodite.[17] The Greeks and Romans, encountering the Phœnician Astarte in various regions, sometimes called her Hera or Juno, that is, the mistress, the lady par excellence, as in Carthage and at the promontory of Lacinium, and sometimes Aphrodite or Venus, as on Mount Eryx in Sicily. A particularly noteworthy fact, which strongly supports the Asian origins attributed to Etruscan civilization, is that in Strabo's account[18] Juno, or the great popular goddess of that land, was called *Kupra* or *Cypra*, inadvertently recalling the island of Cyprus.[19]

[16] Herodot. 1., 105. *Cf.* Pausan. 1., 14, 3., 23.

[17] This view is shared with O. Müller in his fine and scholarly histoire des Doriens, in German, 1., p. 405 sq.

[18] Lib. 5., p. 241 Casaub. *Cf.* Micali, l'Italie av. la dom. des Rom. vol. 2., p. 51 of the French translation.

[19] The name *Cyprus* is usually derived from *Cyprus*, a daughter or son of Cinyras, a tree or city bearing that name, etc. *Cf.* Meursius, 1., chap. 2. This daughter or son of Cinyras is most likely none other than



The first kings of the island, descendants of Cinyras, and therefore called the *Cinyrades*, exercised both royal and priestly functions. Creuzer[20] believes that this was not always the case and that, in an earlier period, the *Tamirades*, another sacred family originating from Cilicia, exclusively held the priestly functions, while the royal power belonged solely to the Cinyrades? however, this does not seem supported by Tacitus's text, which states the opposite: after Tamiras imported from Cilicia to Cyprus the science and art of the haruspices, the

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the patron goddess of the island, Venus, who united the two sexes, as we will see later. Recalling the name of copper, *æs cyprium, cuprum*, which, even in Homeric times, was worked in Cyprus with great skill, since Agamemnon wore a cuirass made of an alloy of this metal and, according to tradition, Cinyras sent it to him (Iliad. 11., 19 sq.), we cannot resist drawing a new connection. *Couvera* in Indian religions is the god of metals and riches, a kind of Fortune; he dwells in the mountains and is surrounded by *Kinnaras*, music spirits. Venus-Cyprus or Cypra, Venus-Urania, the eldest of the Fates, the same as Destiny and Fortune (Pausan. 1., 19, 7., 26), her husband Vulcan, her priests the Cinyrads, whose leader bears the name of a musical instrument, are these merely chance encounters? *Voy.* above, and Relig. de l'antiq., vol. 1., p. 248 sq.

[20] *Symbolik*, 1., p. 342 sqq., and vol. 2., book 4 of Relig. de l'antiq.

Tamirades, his descendants, were associated, perhaps as soothsayers, with the priesthood of the Cinyrades; later, the Cinyrades removed from this foreign family the privilege they had formally recognized and concentrated both the priesthood and divination together with the royalty in themselves (*regium genus... tantum Cinyrades sacerdos consulitur*). However, it seems to us that in the past a Cilician colony must have played an important role on the island of Cyprus, which may even have owed part of its population and institutions, different from those established by the Phœnicians, to Cilicia. We find proof of this in the genealogy reported above, where a figure named *Sandacus* appears in the fifth degree, immediately before Cinyras. Sandacus, like Cinyras and Adonis, is neither a Greek name nor a Greek hero. One could, admittedly, think of him as Phœnician or Syrian, as the others are; indeed, Apollodorus says he came from Syria to Cilicia, where he founded the city of Celenderis, which bore his image on its coins,[21] married *Pharnace*, daughter of

[21] *Voy.* Pellerin, Recueil, tab. 73; and in Hunter. *Cf.* Eckhel Doctrina

Megessarus,[22] and fathered Cinyras, who later returned to Syria. But the very passage of Tacitus that we are commenting prevents us from interpreting Apollodorus in that way; Tacitus gives the Cilician Tamirades an origin clearly different from that of the Cinyrades, a foreign lineage (*peregrinam stirpem*); and moreover, many other reasons lead us to associate Sandacus instead with the Lydian Hercules *Sandon* (the same as the Persian *Sandes*), a solar hero, effeminate, enslaved to Omphale, that is, to the moon, which had become a masculine power. This explanation seems all the more natural because *Pharnace* recalls *Pharnaces*, the name under which the lunar god was worshipped in the religions of the Pontus.[23] Another equally interesting connection, which confirms the link we suggested earlier between the name Cyprus and the

Num. Vet., 3., p. 51 sq.

[22] Might this Chaldean or Assyrian name originally mean the *great sare*, the *great year*, a meaning that fits perfectly with the sidereal-mythological character of these religions?

[23] Strab. 12., p. 557. *Cf.* Creuzer, 1., p. 345 sqq.; 2., 32, 224, 233; and Rel. of Antiquity, book 4., chap. 3 and 5.

Etruscan goddess Cupra, is that one of the three names of the Sabine Hercules was *Sancus*.[24]

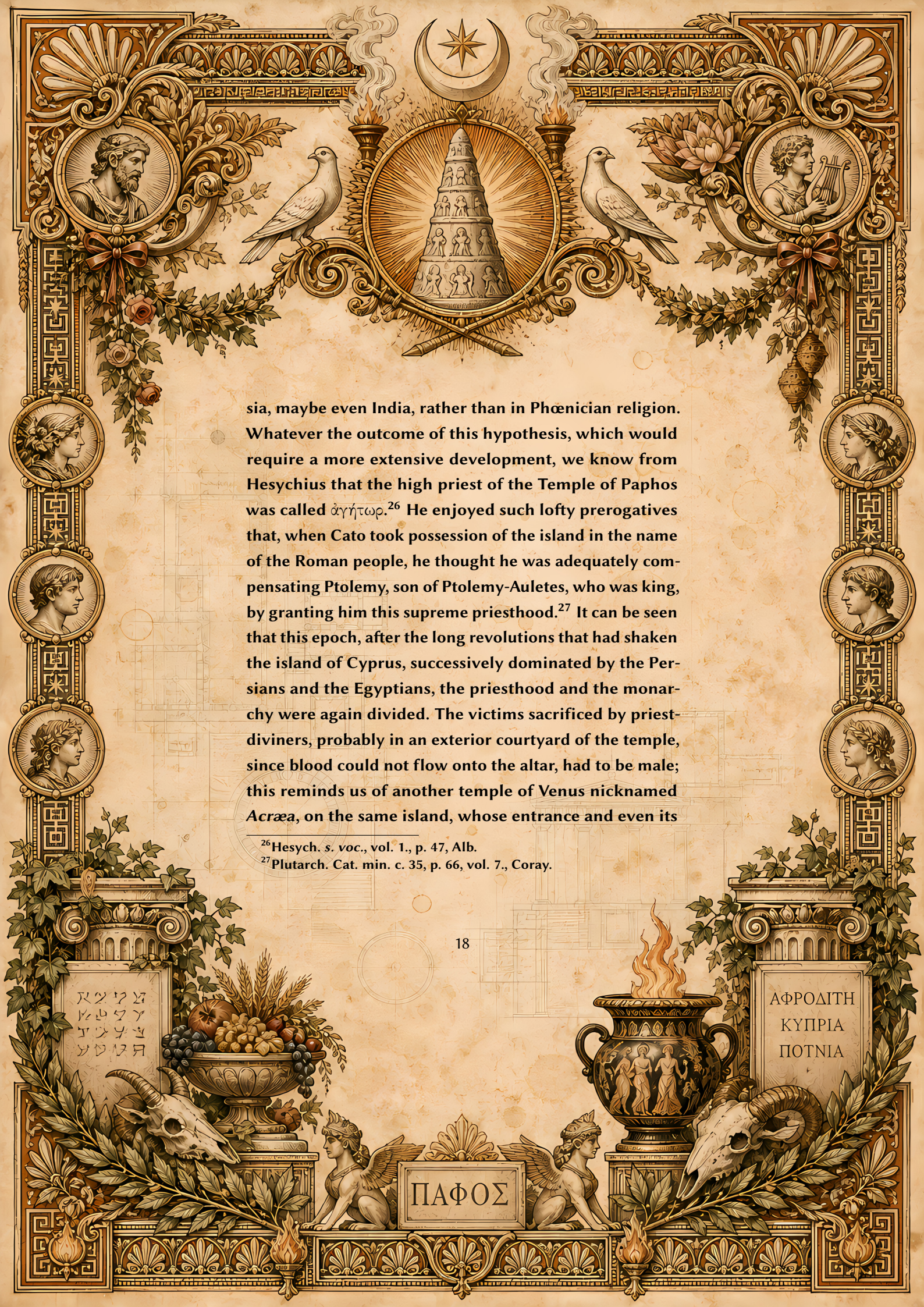
Thus, the religions of ancient Italy are linked in two important ways to those of Asia Minor. A third point of contact is the art of reading the future from the entrails of victims, which was also practiced in Etruria, Lydia, Cilicia, and the island of Cyprus, just as it had been among the earliest Greeks.[25] We would be inclined to look for the principle and original source of these three major connections more in Upper Asia than along the Syrian coasts; and in the primitive cults of Assyria and perhaps Per-

[24] *Sancus-Semo-Fidius.* Varro on *L. L.*, 4., 10; Propert., 4., 10; Ovid. Fastor. 6., 213-217; Augustin. de Civ. Dei, 18., 19. *Cf.* Creuzer, 2., p. 964 sq., and Relig. de l'antiq., vol. 2., book 5, sect. 2, chap. 5, art. 1. — We do not wish to insist upon this last connection too much, since *Sancus* appears to be the same name as *Sanctus*, *i. e.*, the god of sworn faith (*me Dius Fidius*, *me Hercules*), deriving, like it, from the root *sancire*, which also occurs in Sanskrit *sandj*, meaning to adhere, to be faithful. Nevertheless, it is notable that Sancus is a Hercules just as Sandon and Sandacus are: might these three names share a common origin, as do the three figures?

[25] Creuzer, 2., p. 937, and Relig. de l'antiq., book 5., sect. 2, c. 4, art. 2.

sia, maybe even India, rather than in Phœnician religion. Whatever the outcome of this hypothesis, which would require a more extensive development, we know from Hesychius that the high priest of the Temple of Paphos was called ἀγήτωρ.[26] He enjoyed such lofty prerogatives that, when Cato took possession of the island in the name of the Roman people, he thought he was adequately compensating Ptolemy, son of Ptolemy-Auletes, who was king, by granting him this supreme priesthood.[27] It can be seen that this epoch, after the long revolutions that had shaken the island of Cyprus, successively dominated by the Persians and the Egyptians, the priesthood and the monarchy were again divided. The victims sacrificed by priest-diviners, probably in an exterior courtyard of the temple, since blood could not flow onto the altar, had to be male; this reminds us of another temple of Venus nicknamed *Acræa*, on the same island, whose entrance and even its

[26] Hesych. *s. voc.*, vol. 1., p. 47, Alb.
[27] Plutarch. Cat. min. c. 35, p. 66, vol. 7., Coray.



sight were forbidden to women.[28] There was surely, as Mr. Münter thinks,[29] a mystical motif there that might not be very difficult to penetrate. It was likely the same motif that attached a particular faith to omens drawn from the entrails of kid goats or adult goats, favored symbols of fertility deities.[30] The main altar was probably located in the inner courtyard of the temple (unless the temple itself was a hypaethral building), because, according to popular tradition reported by Tacitus and by the elder Pliny,[31] although it was outdoors, rain never wet it. The purity and simplicity of the cult offered there contrast

[28] This temple was situated on a promontory called Olympus. Strab. 14., pag. 682.

[29] Ouvr. c., p. 21.

[30] Perhaps this was the belief in a single, self-sufficient generative power capable of producing all things, a power usually represented by the figure of the hermaphrodite who unites the two sexes: later we will find a Venus of Cyprus depicted in exactly this way. There is something entirely analogous in the religion of Mithra as it was conceived in Asia Minor: "Mithra, it is said, hated women, and he fertilized a rock, etc." *Conf.* Creuzer, 1., 775, and Relig. de l'antiq., vol. 1., p. 371 sqq., coll. 346 sq.

[31] Tac. *l. l.*; Plin. H. N. 2., 96, where the reading is probably *aram* rather than *aream*.

sharply with what the authors tell us about the horrific sacrifices performed in other temples on the island, notably at Salamis and Amathonte, in honor of Jupiter, that is, apparently, the Phœnician or Syrian Baal.[32] Münter conjectures that in Paphos the future was still predicted by the flight of birds, especially doves, which, dedicated to the local goddess, were prophetic there just as they were at Dodona, on Eryx, and in all the sanctuaries of Venus-Astarte in Syria and elsewhere. Likewise, were fish consecrated to her, as they were to the goddesses Derceto and Atargatis? That is a question we will not discuss here, as it presents additional difficulties.[33]

It remains for us to discuss the structure of the temple and the figure of the idol that represented the goddess: let's begin with the latter. According to Tacitus's

[32] Lactant. Instit. Divin. 1., 21; Ovid. Metam. 10., 224; Lutat. in Epitom. *Cf.* Athenæus 4., 14; Münter, *l. l.* p. 22 sq.

[33] Münter, *l. l.*, p. 25-28. *Cf.* Creuzer, 2., pp. 61-85; and Relig. de l'antiq., vol. 2., book 4, ch. 3. — Doves dedicated to Cybele as well as to Venus-Astarte constitute a new point of connection between these religions and the cult of Mithra, where these birds appear to have played a very elevated and symbolic role.

picturesque description, it was a true cone, or, as Maximus of Tyre puts it,[34] a white pyramid. Indeed, this is the primary of the forms presented to us by the engraved stones and especially by the medals struck in Cyprus under the emperors, from Augustus to Macrinus.[35] Variations of minor importance can be observed and seem to be attributable either to the artists or to the various ornaments that adorned the conical idol, such as necklaces, garlands, veils, etc. What was the reason for this form, so simple yet so bizarre, given to the celestial goddess? In our view, attempts to find an explanation in the barbarism of the early centuries have been in vain, those periods used raw or roughly carved stones for images of deities that were equally crude, images that were later preserved in more

[34] Dissertat. 38. *Cf.* Servius ad Æneid. 1., 724. *In modum umbilici, vel, ut quidam volunt, metæ.*

[35] Eckhel Doct. Num. Vet. vol. 3., Cyprus, p. 84 sqq.; Mionnet, Description de médailles, vol. 3., p. 670 sq. *Cf.* Lenz, *die Gœttin von Paphos auf alten Bildwerken, und Baphomet*, Gotha, 1808, in-4°, with two plates; Münter, plates of the cited dissertation; and the additional plate relating to the present dissertation, in the portrait collection for Tacitus's works, by P. Bouillon.

enlightened ages precisely because of their antiquity and the consecration of time.[36] The manner in which Tacitus speaks of the Venus of Paphos, incidentally, was neither crude nor rough, and instead suggests a motive of a superior order, a hidden, symbolic, and mystical pattern, as Philostratus more clearly insinuates in the life of Apollonius.[37] These were symbols that the divine images of the Orientals, i. e., ideas incorporated as sensible forms, appeared to express necessarily. Now, the goddess in question was of Oriental origin, and probably her singular statue as well; she was, as mentioned above, the same as the Astarte worshipped by the Phœnicians and the Carthaginians. On the medals of Sidon, as well as on certain stones found in the ruins of Carthage, one often encounters conical or triangular figures, either isolated or paired, which must have been related to the cult of Baal and his celestial wife. Recently, a considerably sized

[36] Lenz, dissert. cit., p. 2. *Cf.* Brot., Excurs. ad Tac., p. 26, vol. 5., ed. Lemaire.

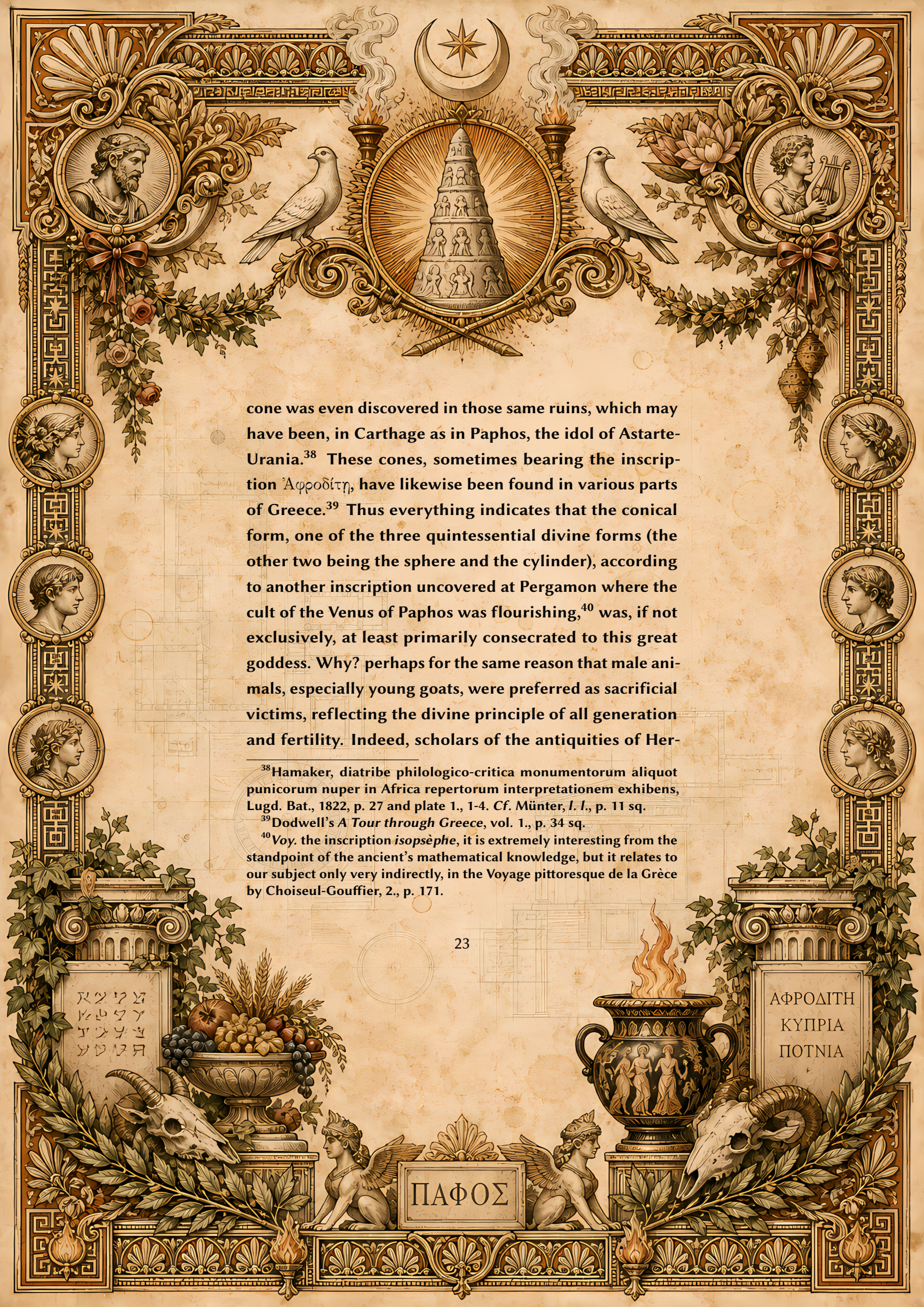
[37] 3., 16. Τὸ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ἔδος... ξυμβολικῶς ἱδρυμένον.

cone was even discovered in those same ruins, which may have been, in Carthage as in Paphos, the idol of Astarte-Urania.[38] These cones, sometimes bearing the inscription Ἀφροδίτη, have likewise been found in various parts of Greece.[39] Thus everything indicates that the conical form, one of the three quintessential divine forms (the other two being the sphere and the cylinder), according to another inscription uncovered at Pergamon where the cult of the Venus of Paphos was flourishing,[40] was, if not exclusively, at least primarily consecrated to this great goddess. Why? perhaps for the same reason that male animals, especially young goats, were preferred as sacrificial victims, reflecting the divine principle of all generation and fertility. Indeed, scholars of the antiquities of Her-

[38] Hamaker, diatribe philologico-critica monumentorum aliquot punicorum nuper in Africa repertorum interpretationem exhibens, Lugd. Bat., 1822, p. 27 and plate 1., 1-4. *Cf.* Münter, *l. l.*, p. 11 sq.

[39] Dodwell's *A Tour through Greece*, vol. 1., p. 34 sq.

[40] *Voy.* the inscription *isopsèphe*, it is extremely interesting from the standpoint of the ancient's mathematical knowledge, but it relates to our subject only very indirectly, in the Voyage pittoresque de la Grèce by Choiseul-Gouffier, 2., p. 171.



culaneum, who interpreted one of the most remarkable paintings uncovered in that city, argued that the cone was a symbol of love and was connected to the ancient and deeply meaningful cult of the phallus.[41] It is even possible that the statue of the goddess of Paphos was originally a kind of lingam or yoni-lingam, using Indian terminology, a probable source of this naive cult of the productive forces of nature.[42] Perhaps she wanted to represent these active and passive forces in their communal operation, using the emblem of sexual organs in union,[43] just as another Venus idol that was seen at Amathonte, a known branch of Paphos, depicted the goddess as a woman with a beard, a scepter, and the unmistakable characteristics of a hermaphrodite.[44] What lends certain weight to this

[41] *Voy. Pitture d'Ercolano*, vol. 3., tab. 52., p. 275.

[42] *Voy.* Relig. de l'antiq., vol. 1., book 1., chap. 2, and the plates that belong to it in vol. 4., section 1.

[43] Apul. Metamorph. 11., p. 754, Oudend. *Tu, Cœlestis Venus, quæ primis rerum exordiis sexuum diversitatem generato amore sociasti, et æterna sobole humano genere propagato, nunc circumfluo Paphi sacrario coleris.*

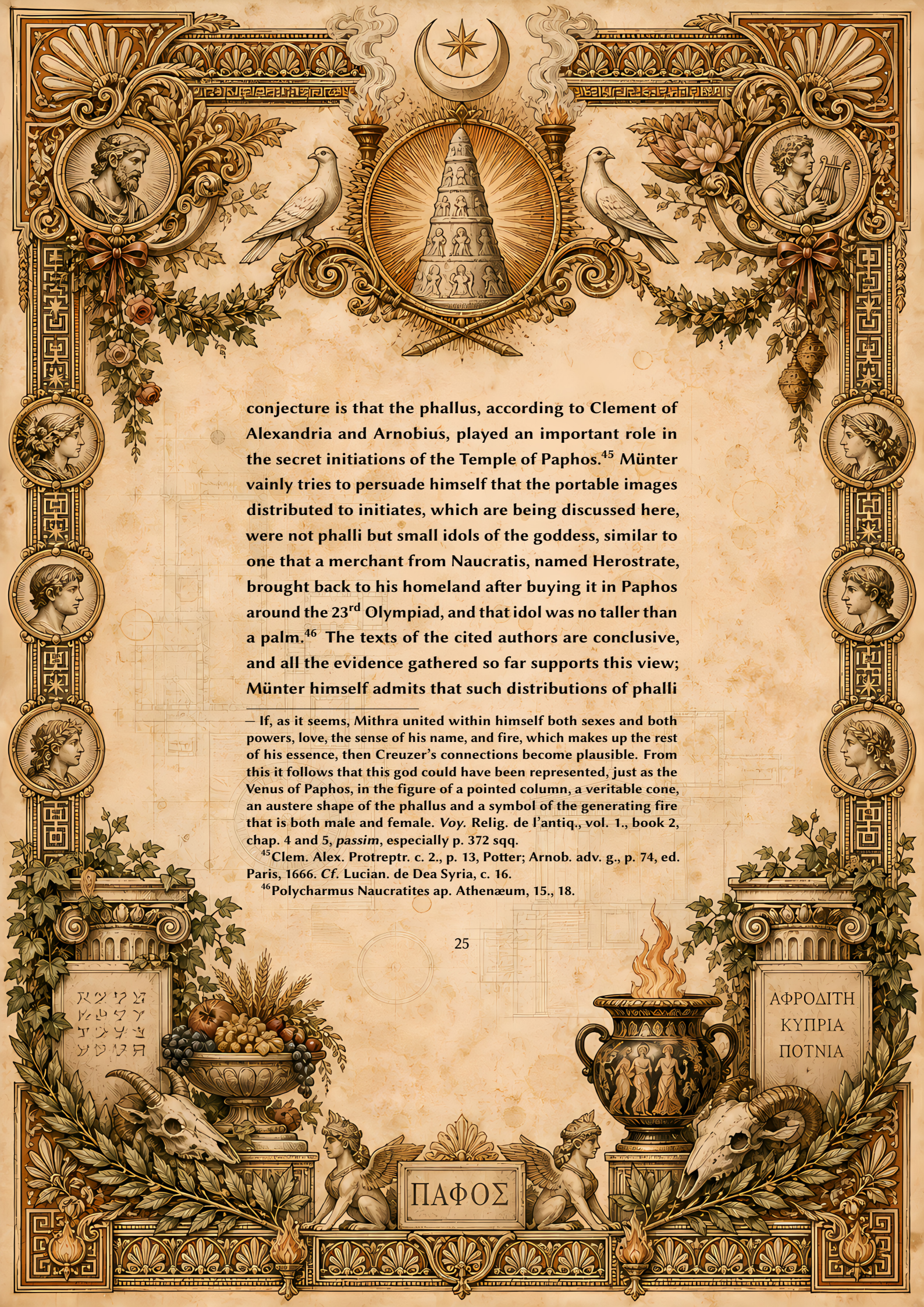
[44] Macrob. Saturn. 3., 8; *Cf.* Philochori fragm. p. 19 sq., *ed.* Siebelis.

conjecture is that the phallus, according to Clement of Alexandria and Arnobius, played an important role in the secret initiations of the Temple of Paphos.[45] Münter vainly tries to persuade himself that the portable images distributed to initiates, which are being discussed here, were not phalli but small idols of the goddess, similar to one that a merchant from Naucratis, named Herostrate, brought back to his homeland after buying it in Paphos around the 23rd Olympiad, and that idol was no taller than a palm.[46] The texts of the cited authors are conclusive, and all the evidence gathered so far supports this view; Münter himself admits that such distributions of phalli

— If, as it seems, Mithra united within himself both sexes and both powers, love, the sense of his name, and fire, which makes up the rest of his essence, then Creuzer's connections become plausible. From this it follows that this god could have been represented, just as the Venus of Paphos, in the figure of a pointed column, a veritable cone, an austere shape of the phallus and a symbol of the generating fire that is both male and female. *Voy.* Relig. de l'antiq., vol. 1., book 2, chap. 4 and 5, *passim*, especially p. 372 sqq.

[45] Clem. Alex. Protreptr. c. 2., p. 13, Potter; Arnob. adv. g., p. 74, ed. Paris, 1666. *Cf.* Lucian. de Dea Syria, c. 16.

[46] Polycharmus Naucratites ap. Athenæum, 15., 18.

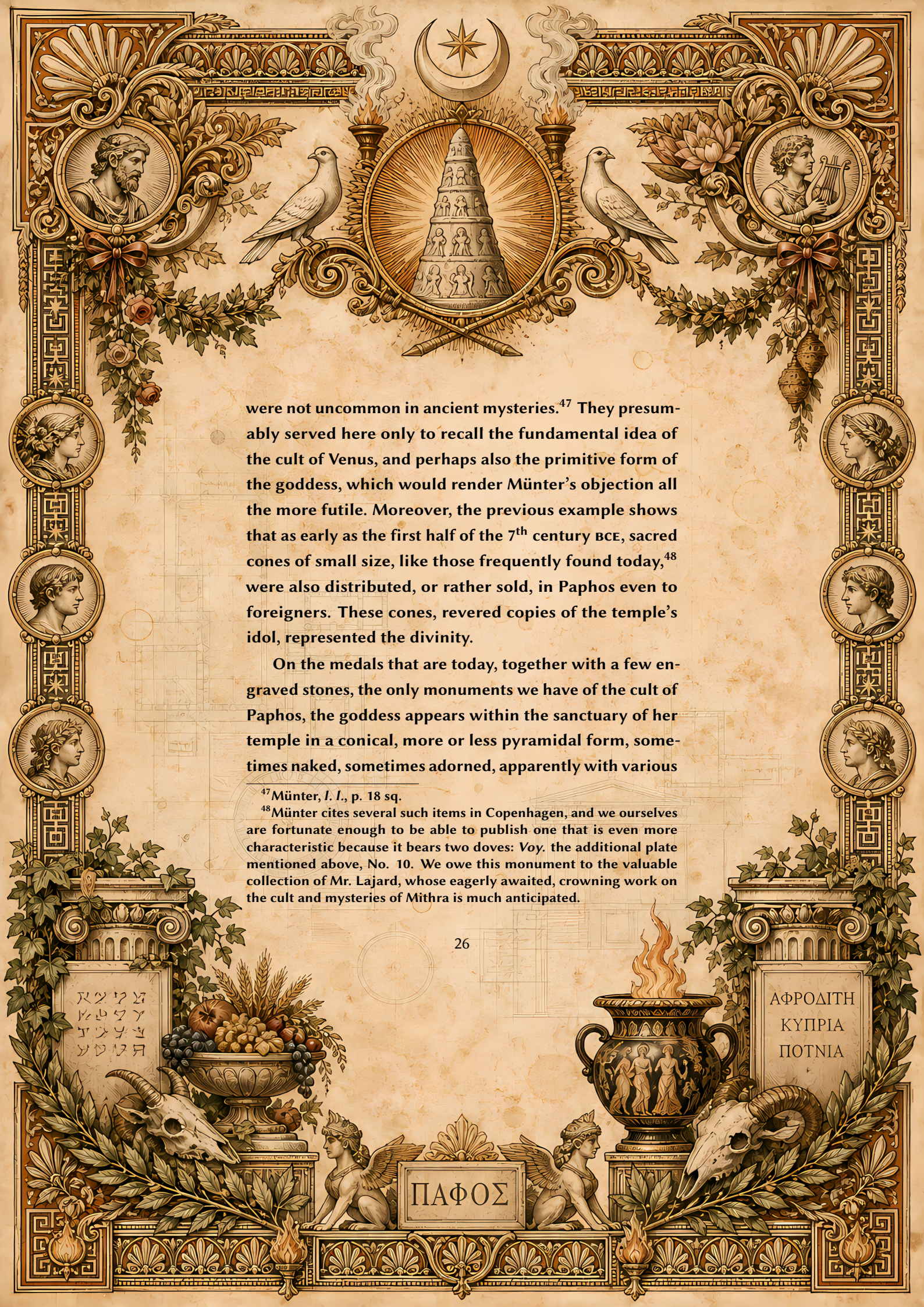


were not uncommon in ancient mysteries.[47] They presumably served here only to recall the fundamental idea of the cult of Venus, and perhaps also the primitive form of the goddess, which would render Münter's objection all the more futile. Moreover, the previous example shows that as early as the first half of the 7th century BCE, sacred cones of small size, like those frequently found today,[48] were also distributed, or rather sold, in Paphos even to foreigners. These cones, revered copies of the temple's idol, represented the divinity.

On the medals that are today, together with a few engraved stones, the only monuments we have of the cult of Paphos, the goddess appears within the sanctuary of her temple in a conical, more or less pyramidal form, sometimes naked, sometimes adorned, apparently with various

[47] Münter, *l. l.*, p. 18 sq.

[48] Münter cites several such items in Copenhagen, and we ourselves are fortunate enough to be able to publish one that is even more characteristic because it bears two doves: *Voy.* the additional plate mentioned above, No. 10. We owe this monument to the valuable collection of Mr. Lajard, whose eagerly awaited, crowning work on the cult and mysteries of Mithra is much anticipated.



accessories, almost always in the manner of a crown. At her sides or in front of her shine two torches, signs of nocturnal orgies, as Creuzer suggests.[49] It is also possible that these torches simply illuminated the cella, while the idol rested in the dark depths of the adytum, according to custom. Moreover, because of the nature and the imperfection of the surviving figurative representations, it is impossible to obtain a satisfactory picture of either the overall shape of the sacred building or the relationship of its various parts; and Tacitus, like other ancient writers, leaves us in almost complete ignorance on this point. It is even uncertain where the miraculous altar, respected by the waters of the sky, was situated, unless it stood within the semicircular enclosure, a sort of open vestibule or inner courtyard, that all the monuments indicate in front of the cella and that appears to be surrounded by an open balustrade shaped like a lattice.[50] Sometimes,

[49] *Symbolik*, 2., pag. 85. *Cf.* Hetsch, *ap.* Münter, *l. l.*, p. 35; and the additional plate, especially No. 2.

[50] This is the view of Messrs. Münter and Hetsch, dissertation cited,

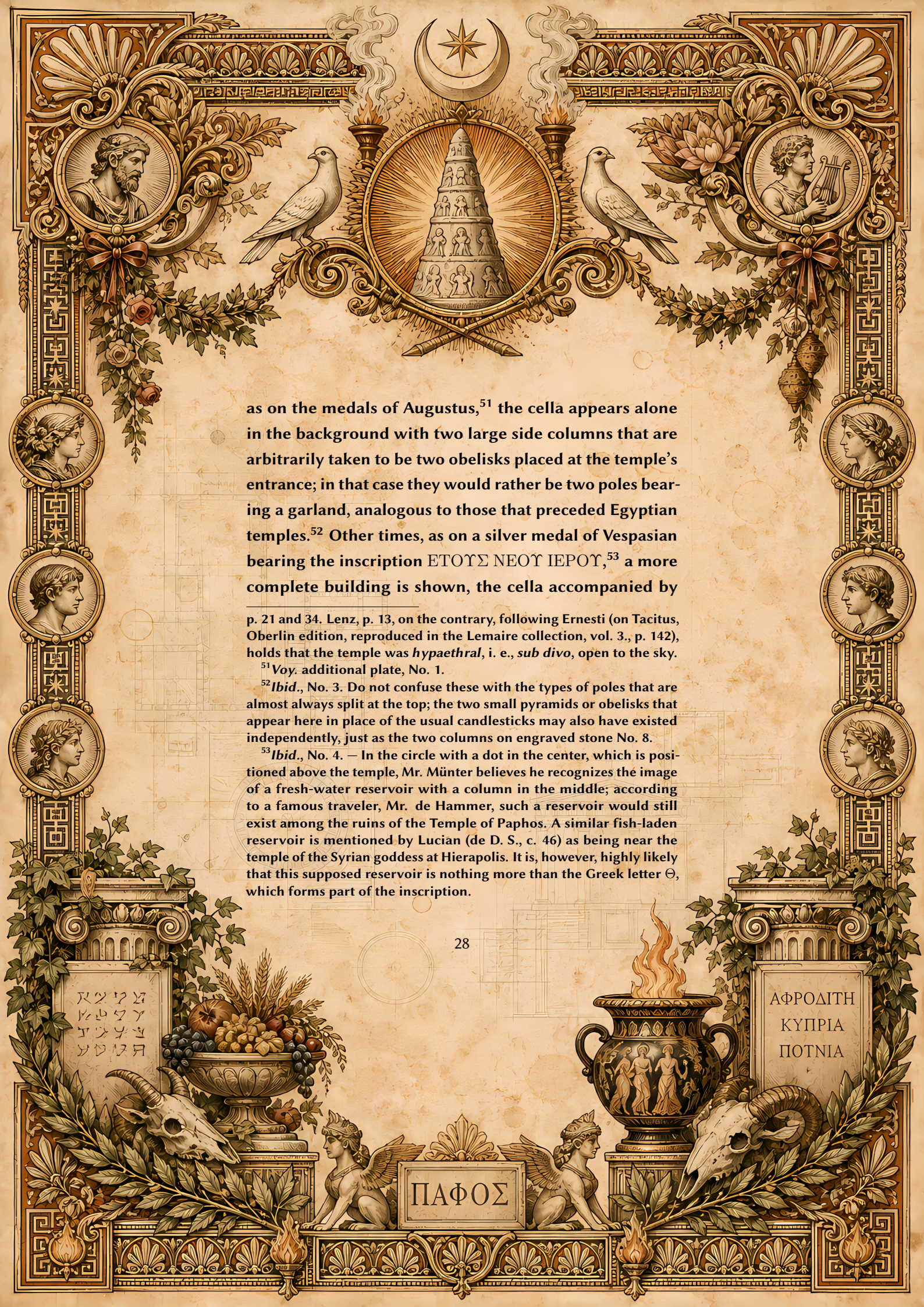
as on the medals of Augustus,[51] the cella appears alone in the background with two large side columns that are arbitrarily taken to be two obelisks placed at the temple's entrance; in that case they would rather be two poles bearing a garland, analogous to those that preceded Egyptian temples.[52] Other times, as on a silver medal of Vespasian bearing the inscription ΕΤΟΥΣ ΝΕΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΥ,[53] a more complete building is shown, the cella accompanied by

p. 21 and 34. Lenz, p. 13, on the contrary, following Ernesti (on Tacitus, Oberlin edition, reproduced in the Lemaire collection, vol. 3., p. 142), holds that the temple was *hypaethral*, i. e., *sub divo*, open to the sky.

[51] *Voy.* additional plate, No. 1.

[52] *Ibid.*, No. 3. Do not confuse these with the types of poles that are almost always split at the top; the two small pyramids or obelisks that appear here in place of the usual candlesticks may also have existed independently, just as the two columns on engraved stone No. 8.

[53] *Ibid.*, No. 4. — In the circle with a dot in the center, which is positioned above the temple, Mr. Münter believes he recognizes the image of a fresh-water reservoir with a column in the middle; according to a famous traveler, Mr. de Hammer, such a reservoir would still exist among the ruins of the Temple of Paphos. A similar fish-laden reservoir is mentioned by Lucian (de D. S., c. 46) as being near the temple of the Syrian goddess at Hierapolis. It is, however, highly likely that this supposed reservoir is nothing more than the Greek letter Θ, which forms part of the inscription.



two lower sections (perhaps a vestibule), which are even more distinct and better rendered on the coins of Empress Julia Domna and her son Caracalla.[54] These later depictions are the richest of all: above the cella, whose upper part seems pierced by three openings, there is a crescent or half-moon topped by an eight-rayed star, undoubtedly representing, as on the Phœnician medals and other monuments, the star of Venus.[55] Doves equally dedicated to the goddess appear everywhere, in the courtyard or the semicircular vestibule; in the sanctuary, fluttering around the uniquely modified idol; and on the temple roof, at the two lower sections. The medals of Pergamon and Sardis, two cities devoted to the deity of Paphos, as their inscriptions state,[56] present a few other variants of the

[54] *Ibid.*, No. 5. — One might think that here the conical idol approaches a human shape; but when compared with Nos. 7 and 9, it becomes clear that the modifications consist only of simple accessories or ornaments.

[55] This is a probable conjecture of Münter, p. 33, note, and p. 38. One can also associate this star with an octagonal mosaic found in the ruins.

[56] Additional plate, Nos. 6 and 7. Also compare the two engraved

same basic design, without shedding further light on the matter.

The very ruins of ancient Paphos would be a more illuminating source for us if they had been less mistreated by time, or if we possessed more detailed descriptions of them. But, as a learned architect admits,[57] who nevertheless dared to attempt a restoration of the Temple of Venus, the topographic position of this building can be determined quite accurately from the reports of recent travelers,[58] whereas it is difficult to form any clear idea of its shape and layout without resorting to other documents that we have found to be almost equally unsatisfactory on these two points. This temple, originally

stones, Nos. 8 and 9. On the latter, the depiction of the Temple of Paphos is merely incidental; the main subject is Serapis on his throne, scepter in hand, a modius on his head, and a three-headed Cerberus at his feet.

[57] Mr. Professor Hetsch, following the cited dissertation of Mr. Münter, p. 30 sqq., — and plates 1, 2, especially 3, which are attached thereto.

[58] De Hammer, *Topographische Ansichten gesammelt auf einer Reise in die Levante* (Vienna, 1811), pp. 134, 150 and the plates; Voyage d'Ali-Bey, vol. 2., p. 144, and the atlas, pl. 34.

built on a Phœnician or Syrian model, perhaps even on the very model of the temple of Ascalon,[59] appears to have been situated on a height and on a rocky ground within the old city, not far from the sea.[60] It is probable

[59] Herodot. 1., 105. *Cf.* Lenz, p. 11; Münter, p. 5.

[60] Ten stadia from the coast and sixty east of New-Paphos, according to Strabo, 14., 683. Near the village of *Koukla* one finds fairly considerable ruins that Pocoke already conjectured must be those of Palæ-Paphos. Mr. de Hammer, who visited them later, discovered numerous inscriptions to Venus, ΤΗΙ ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗΙ, and, as he believes, partially erased Phœnician inscriptions. The name *Koukla* naturally brings to mind *Golgos* or *Golgi* (*Voy.* above, p. 4); but was that sufficient reason to identify this ancient city of Cyprus, located in the eastern part of the island, as had been thought until now, and at least mentioned by the ancients on its own account (Steph. Byz. *in voc., coll.*; Plin. H. N. 5., 31; Theocr. Adoniaz., 100 *et ibi* Schol.; Lycophron v. 589 sqq. and sch. *ibid*. *Conf.* Meurs. Cypr. 1., 2; Mannert, *Géographie*, 6., 1, p. 576 sq.) with Palæ-Paphos, which lay in the western part and which no ancient author ever called Golgi? Yet that is exactly what Mr. Münter does on pages 5 and 7; without explicitly stating his reasoning and apparently relying only on the passage where Pausanias (8., 5) says that before the arrival of Agapenor, founder of Paphos and its temple, Venus was worshipped by the Cypriots only at Golgi. He should at least have linked this passage to another statement by the same author (1., 14) that hints the Paphians were the first worshippers of Venus in Cyprus, and especially to the even more explicit passage of Tacitus (Ann. 3., 62), where the Temple of Paphos is positively called the old-

that this is the old temple, referred to by Strabo,[61] in contrast with the well-built temples that adorned the new Paphos, we may therefore say, that it is the structure of Palæ-Paphos that the figurative monuments represent. Only there could the ancient and sacred idol have resided, the wholly Oriental idol described with a curious astonishment by Greek and Roman authors. Beyond that, perhaps we are not sufficiently clear on the matter; but the form of the sanctuary, no less bizarre at its core than that of the goddess, as we see both on the medals, lends considerable strength to our conjecture. Moreover, we know from the geographer mentioned earlier that every year a very solemn procession took place from the new city to the old one; and this procession could only have been celebrated in honor of the deity of the latter, undoubt-

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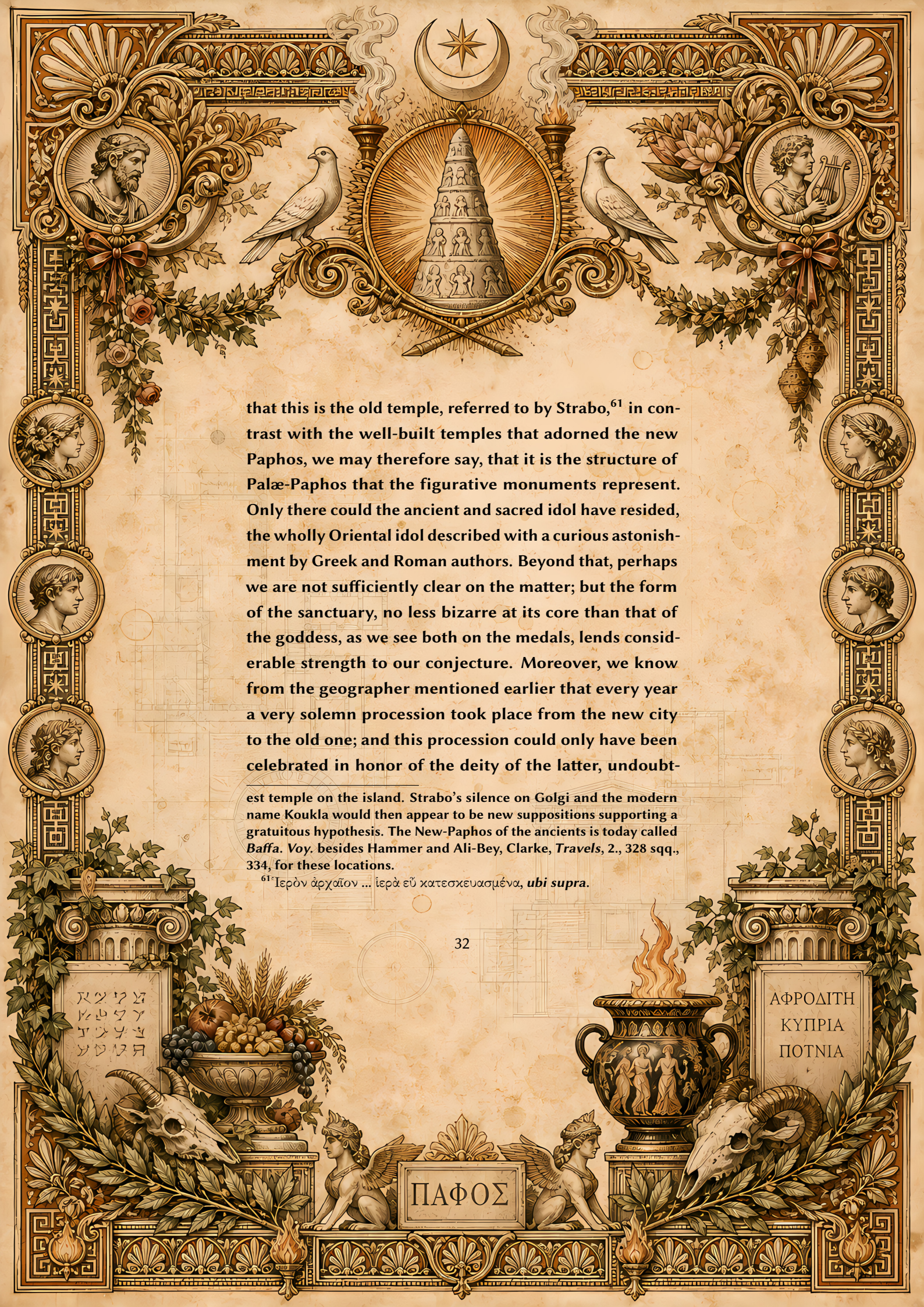
est temple on the island. Strabo's silence on Golgi and the modern name Koukla would then appear to be new suppositions supporting a gratuitous hypothesis. The New-Paphos of the ancients is today called *Baffa*. *Voy.* besides Hammer and Ali-Bey, Clarke, *Travels*, 2., 328 sqq., 334, for these locations.

[61] Ἱερὸν ἀρχαῖον ... ἱερὰ εὖ κατεσκευασμένα, ***ubi supra***.

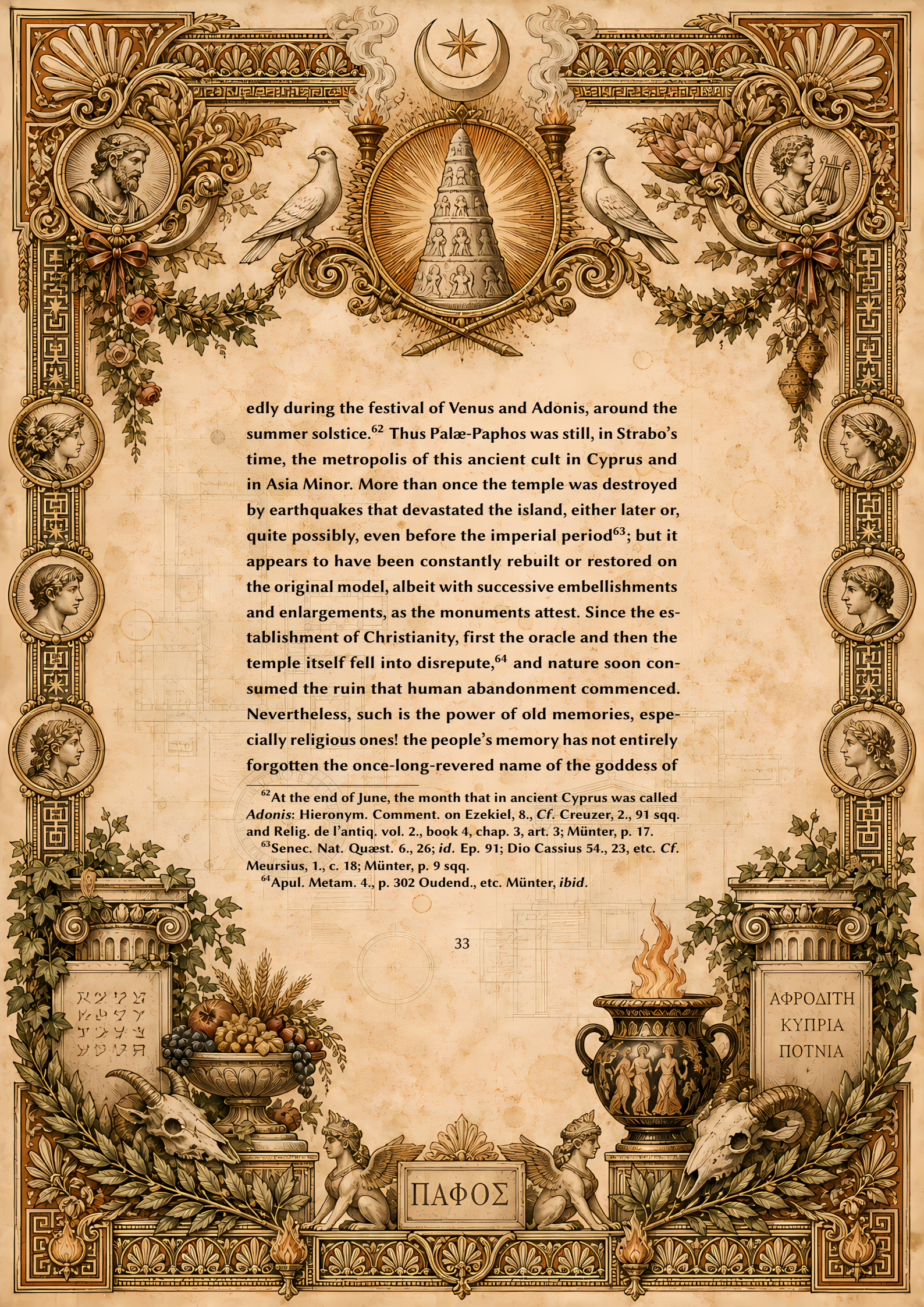


edly during the festival of Venus and Adonis, around the summer solstice.[62] Thus Palæ-Paphos was still, in Strabo's time, the metropolis of this ancient cult in Cyprus and in Asia Minor. More than once the temple was destroyed by earthquakes that devastated the island, either later or, quite possibly, even before the imperial period[63]; but it appears to have been constantly rebuilt or restored on the original model, albeit with successive embellishments and enlargements, as the monuments attest. Since the establishment of Christianity, first the oracle and then the temple itself fell into disrepute,[64] and nature soon consumed the ruin that human abandonment commenced. Nevertheless, such is the power of old memories, especially religious ones! the people's memory has not entirely forgotten the once-long-revered name of the goddess of

[62] At the end of June, the month that in ancient Cyprus was called *Adonis*: Hieronym. Comment. on Ezekiel, 8., *Cf.* Creuzer, 2., 91 sqq. and Relig. de l'antiq. vol. 2., book 4, chap. 3, art. 3; Münter, p. 17.

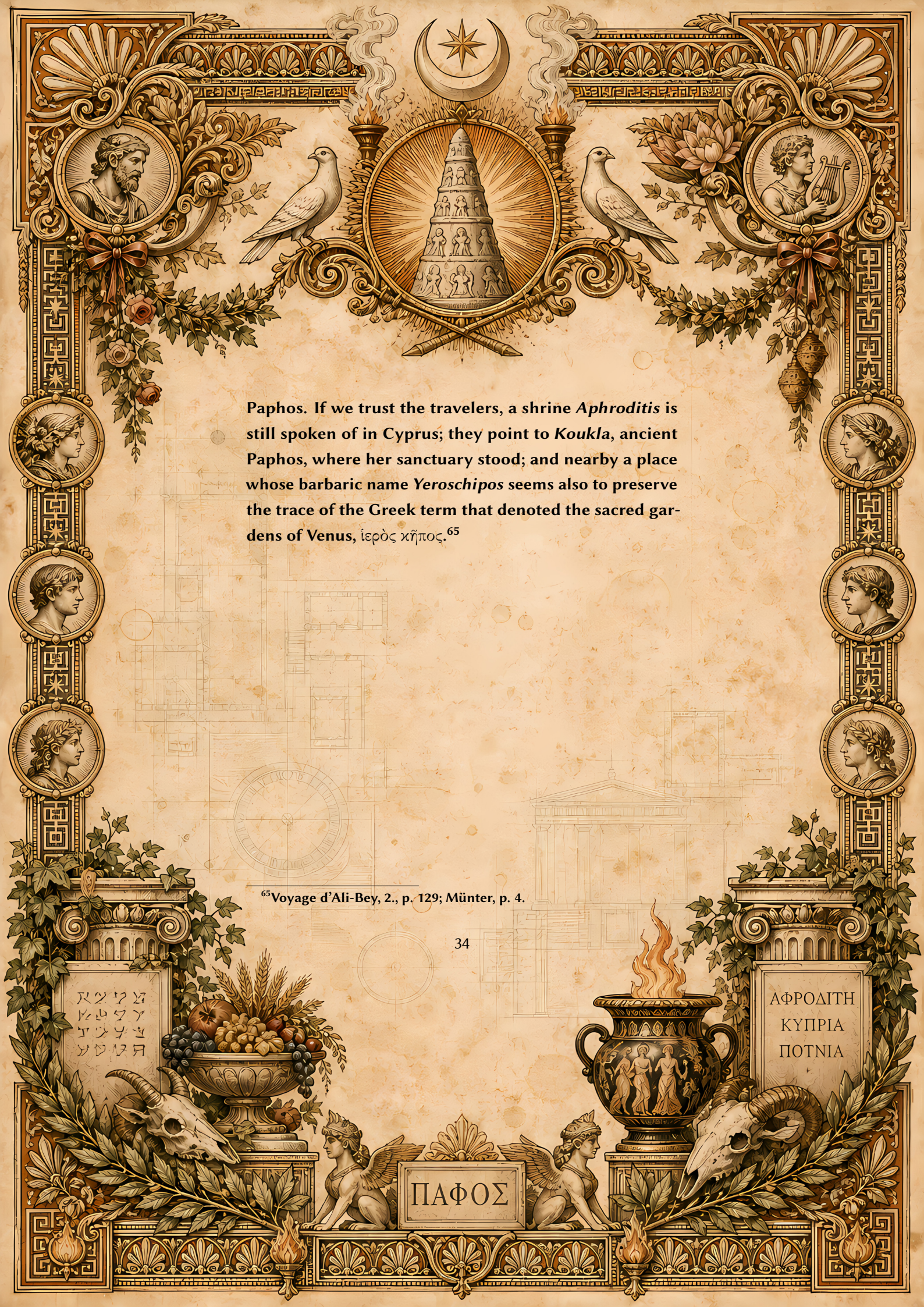
[63] Senec. Nat. Quæst. 6., 26; *id.* Ep. 91; Dio Cassius 54., 23, etc. *Cf.* Meursius, 1., c. 18; Münter, p. 9 sqq.

[64] Apul. Metam. 4., p. 302 Oudend., etc. Münter, *ibid.*



Paphos. If we trust the travelers, a shrine *Aphroditis* is still spoken of in Cyprus; they point to *Koukla*, ancient Paphos, where her sanctuary stood; and nearby a place whose barbaric name *Yeroschipos* seems also to preserve the trace of the Greek term that denoted the sacred gardens of Venus, ἱερὸς κῆπος.[65]

[65] Voyage d'Ali-Bey, 2., p. 129; Münter, p. 4.



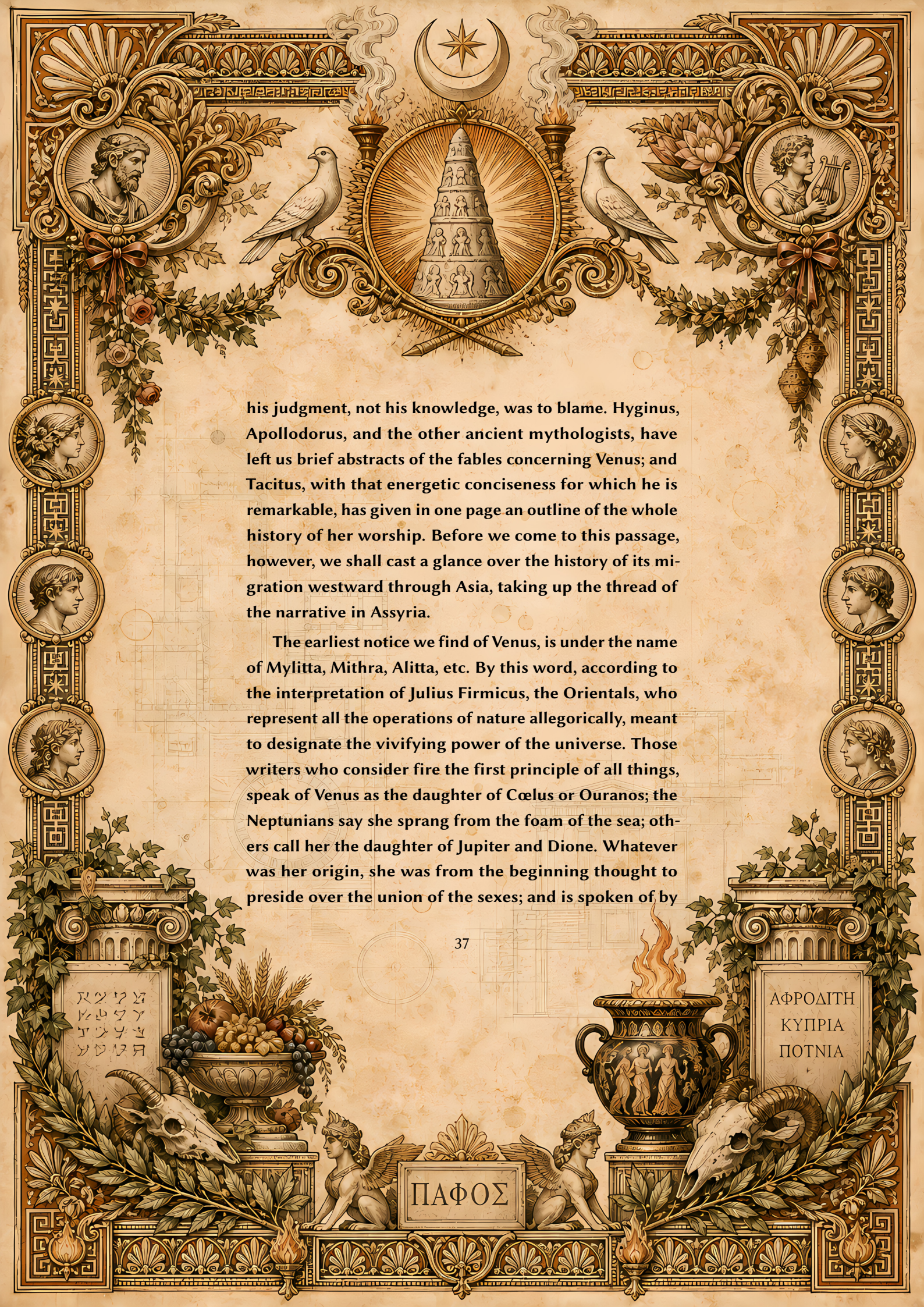
2 Appendix

(Extracted from *The Monthly Review*, Vol. 11, June 1829.)

The student of human nature cannot with impunity neglect researches into antiquity. To obtain just notions of society as it now exists, we must trace it from its feeble beginnings, to its greatest known development, watch its increase, its modifications, its vicissitudes, and learn exactly to appreciate every successive form through which it has passed. It is unquestionably an easy matter to affect a disdain for the wanderings of man's intellect, before the light of truth burst in upon it. But this contempt, even were it real and well-founded, will not satisfy the mind. It is more agreeable to understand than to despise our forefathers; and therefore, researches into their opinions, particularly such as regarded their religion and philosophy, possess peculiar attractions for every individual above a mere newspaper or novel reader.

Before we enter upon any examination of the disser-

tation of Monsieur Guigniaut, it may, perhaps, be useful to trace from other sources, a rapid sketch of the history of the worship of beauty, which, according to the best authorities, sprung up together with most other forms of superstition, in the East, and gradually found its way into Greece, where it attained a perfection and consistency unknown to its original inventors. About the middle of the last century, the Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, of Paris, proposed as the subject of a prize essay, "An inquiry concerning the various names and attributes of Venus, among the different nations of Greece and Italy; the origin and reason of those attributes; the nature of her worship; the celebrated temples, statues, and pictures of this goddess; and the artists who had rendered themselves celebrated by representing her." The essay which obtained the prize, was that of Monsieur Larcher, the well-known translator of Herodotus. With some taste, and immense learning, he amassed almost everything respecting this goddess, to be found in the works of the ancients; and if he did not succeed in composing an agreeable book,



his judgment, not his knowledge, was to blame. Hyginus, Apollodorus, and the other ancient mythologists, have left us brief abstracts of the fables concerning Venus; and Tacitus, with that energetic conciseness for which he is remarkable, has given in one page an outline of the whole history of her worship. Before we come to this passage, however, we shall cast a glance over the history of its migration westward through Asia, taking up the thread of the narrative in Assyria.

The earliest notice we find of Venus, is under the name of Mylitta, Mithra, Alitta, etc. By this word, according to the interpretation of Julius Firmicus, the Orientals, who represent all the operations of nature allegorically, meant to designate the vivifying power of the universe. Those writers who consider fire the first principle of all things, speak of Venus as the daughter of Cœlus or Ouranos; the Neptunians say she sprang from the foam of the sea; others call her the daughter of Jupiter and Dione. Whatever was her origin, she was from the beginning thought to preside over the union of the sexes; and is spoken of by

the mystical Orpheus, as reason is by Lao-tseu, the celebrated Chinese philosopher, as the mother of the universe — πάντα γὰρ ἐκ σέθεν ἐστὶν, says he, in his hymn to this goddess. Servius also observes to the same effect — "Dicunt ipsam Venerem esse matrem Deûm." So great and universal was the power of Venus, that she exercised authority even over the fates, the iron goddesses, who resisted all other rule.

From Assyria the worship of Venus passed to Phœnicia, and thence to Cyprus. This worship, which in the course of time degenerated into prostitution, was pure at first, and offered up to Venus Urania, a virgin goddess. Herodotus speaks of a shameful custom which had insinuated itself at Babylon, into the ceremonies of this worship, and afterwards prevailed at Heliopolis of Phœnicia, and at Aphka (Hodie Afka) near Mount Lebanon. Mr. Larcher says that Constantine destroyed the temples, and abolished the infamous custom in the last two cities: but in this he is perfectly mistaken; for, whatever may have been the fate of the temples, the custom still survives, in

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the midst of other manners, and other creeds. Zosimus, who passes over the practice to which we have alluded, amuses his readers with the fabulous history of a globe of fire or lighted torch, which appeared in the air, in the environs of the temple; and gravely says, that the offerings made to the goddess were thrown into a lake close at hand, and that such as were accepted sunk to the bottom, while those which the divinity of the place refused, floated upon the top.

The remarks of Mr. Larcher on the name Salambo, which according to Hesychius, the Babylonians applied to Venus, are very ingenious. They could not, says he, have made use of this term, since it is a Greek word, derived from σάλα which properly signifies the agitation of the sea, and metaphorically that of the soul. From σάλα is derived σαλαΐζειν, to strike the bosom, as in grief; or to lament the loss of something. Σαλαΐς, groans; σαλάβη, the agitation of the soul. According to the author of the Etymologicum Magnum, Σαλάμβας was a goddess thus named, because she wandered about, weeping for Adonis. Anacreon uses

the word σαλαΐζειν in the sense of, “to weep,” “to deplore;” for grief and trouble agitate and disturb the soul. Thus, Salambo, signifies Venus lamenting the death of Adonis. Selden supposes Delephat, and the Syrian goddess, to have been identical with Venus. Strabo says she was called Atargatis; and Eratosthenes gives her the name of Derceto.

This Venus, in fact, was known under many different names. According to Cicero, in his work on the Nature of the Gods, she was called Astarte in Syria. It was to this goddess that the Emperor Helagabalus married the new god, which under his own name he had added to the Roman Pantheon. Astarte, who is represented by the Pagans as the wife of Adonis, was worshipped with peculiar honours at Byblos: I have seen, says Lucian, at Byblos, a vast temple dedicated to Venus, in which the orgies of Adonis are celebrated. I have examined these orgies; for pretending that Adonis was killed in their country by the boar, they every year strike themselves in commemoration of this event; they give way to lamentations, perform the prescribed rites, and an air of mourning pervades the

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whole country. When their weeping and self-tormenting cease, sacrifices, such as are performed in honour of the dead, are offered to Adonis. On the following day he is supposed to return to life, his statue is exposed in the open air, and his worshippers shave their heads, as the Egyptians do at the death of Apis.

This festival was observed in nearly all the countries of the East, to perpetuate, according to the mythologists, the remembrance of the loves of Venus and Adonis. The physical interpretation of this fable we leave to others, persuaded that whatever meaning we might attribute to it, a hundred other interpretations equally probable might be discovered. We shall merely observe that a statue of this goddess, supposed to represent the earth when stripped of its beauty by winter, was found on Mount Libanus, with the left hand enveloped in the drapery, the head covered, the countenance sad; and it was even supposed by some, that tears were represented trickling from the eyes.

Shakespeare, who penetrated with philosophical acuteness into the depths of ancient fable, and breathed

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a new life into worn-out legends, has entered with his accustomed truth to nature, into the spirit of this magnificent fable. The goddess is represented wandering about the mountains, dejected, apprehensive, sorrowful for the absence of Adonis. She commences her search with the dawn.

‘Lo! here the gentle lark, weary of rest,
From his moist cabinet mounts up on high,
And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast
The sun ariseth in his majesty:
Who doth the world so gloriously behold,
The cedar-tops and hills seem burnish’d gold.’

‘*Venus* salutes him with this fair good-morrow:
O thou clear God, and patron of all light!
From whom each Lamp and shining Star doth borrow
The beauteous influence, that makes him bright:
There lives a son, that suck’d an earthly mother,
May lend thee light, as thou dost lend to other.’

‘This said, she hasteth to a myrtle grove,
Musing the morning is so much o’er-worn;
And yet she hears no tidings of her love:
She hearkens for his hounds, and for his horn;
Anon she hears them chaunt it lustily,
And all in haste she coasteth to the cry.’ —

p. 85.

Proceeding some little distance, she discovers, by the fierce and eager baying of the hounds, that her lover is engaged in no gentle sport, but attacking the boar, the bear, or the lion. Sad forebodings now throng on her heart. She trembles, and remains rooted to the spot. Anon she sees the tremendous boar dashing by, his snout covered with foam and blood, and bearing all the marks of having been engaged in a fierce struggle.

‘And with that word, she spy’d the hunted boar,
Whose frothy mouth bepainted all with red,
Like milk and blood being mingled both together,
A second fear thro’ all her sinews spread,
Which madly hurries her she knows not whither.’ —

p. 86.

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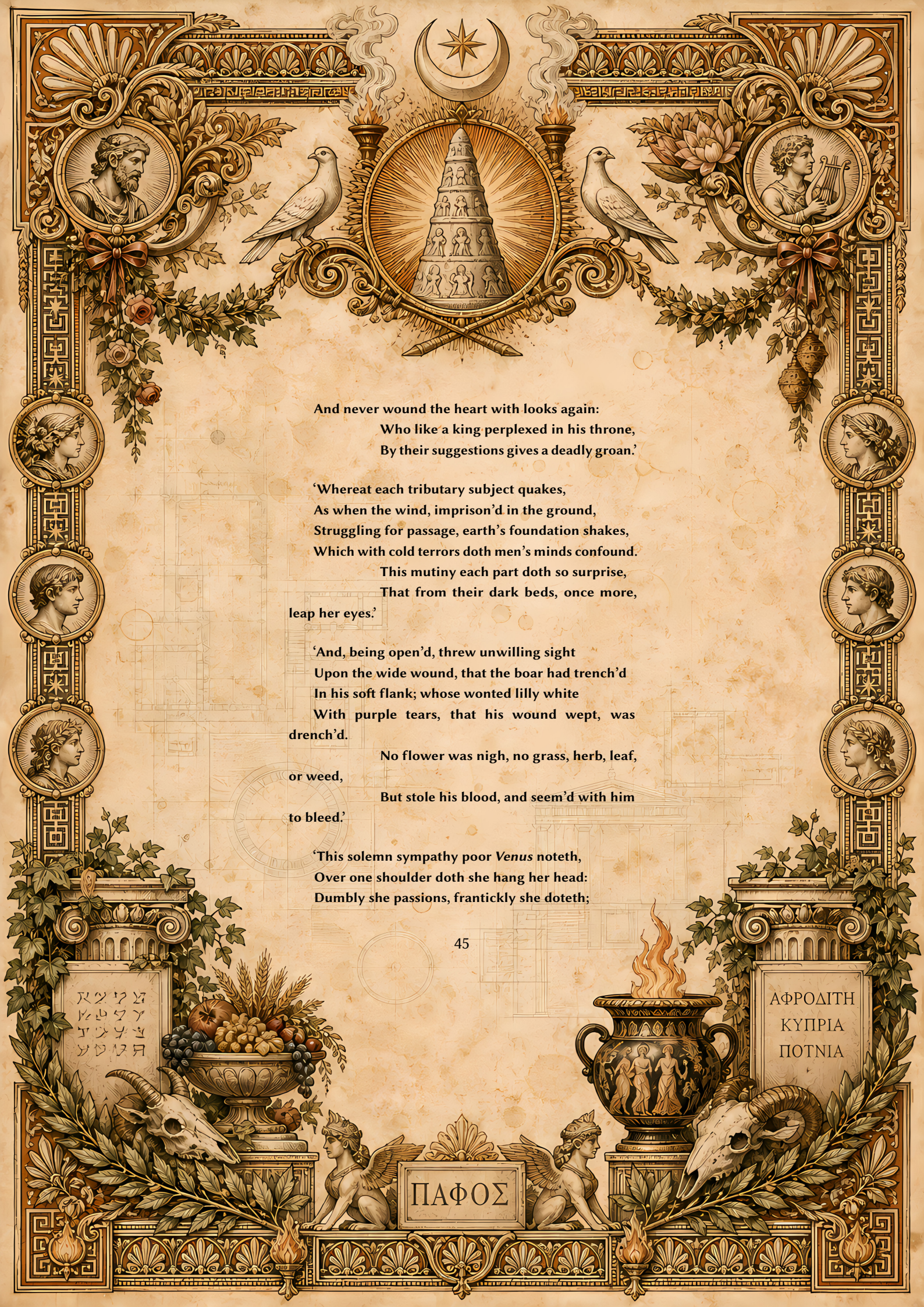
Her terrors now increasing every moment, are presently after enhanced by perceiving the wounded and discomfited hounds roaming about without their master. Anticipating the worst —

‘As faulcon to the lure, away she flies:
The grass stoops not, she treads on it so light,
And in her haste unfortunately spies
The foul boar’s conquest on her fair delight.
Which seen her eyes, as murder’d with the view,
Like stars asham’d of day, themselves withdrew.’

‘Or as the snail, whose tender horns being hit,
Shrinks backward in his shelly cave with pain,
And there, all smother’d up, in shade doth sit,
Long after fearing to creep forth again:
So, at his bloody view her eyes are fled
Into the deep dark cabins of her head.’

‘Where they resign’d their office and their light
To the disposing of her troubled brain:
Who bids them still consort with ugly night,

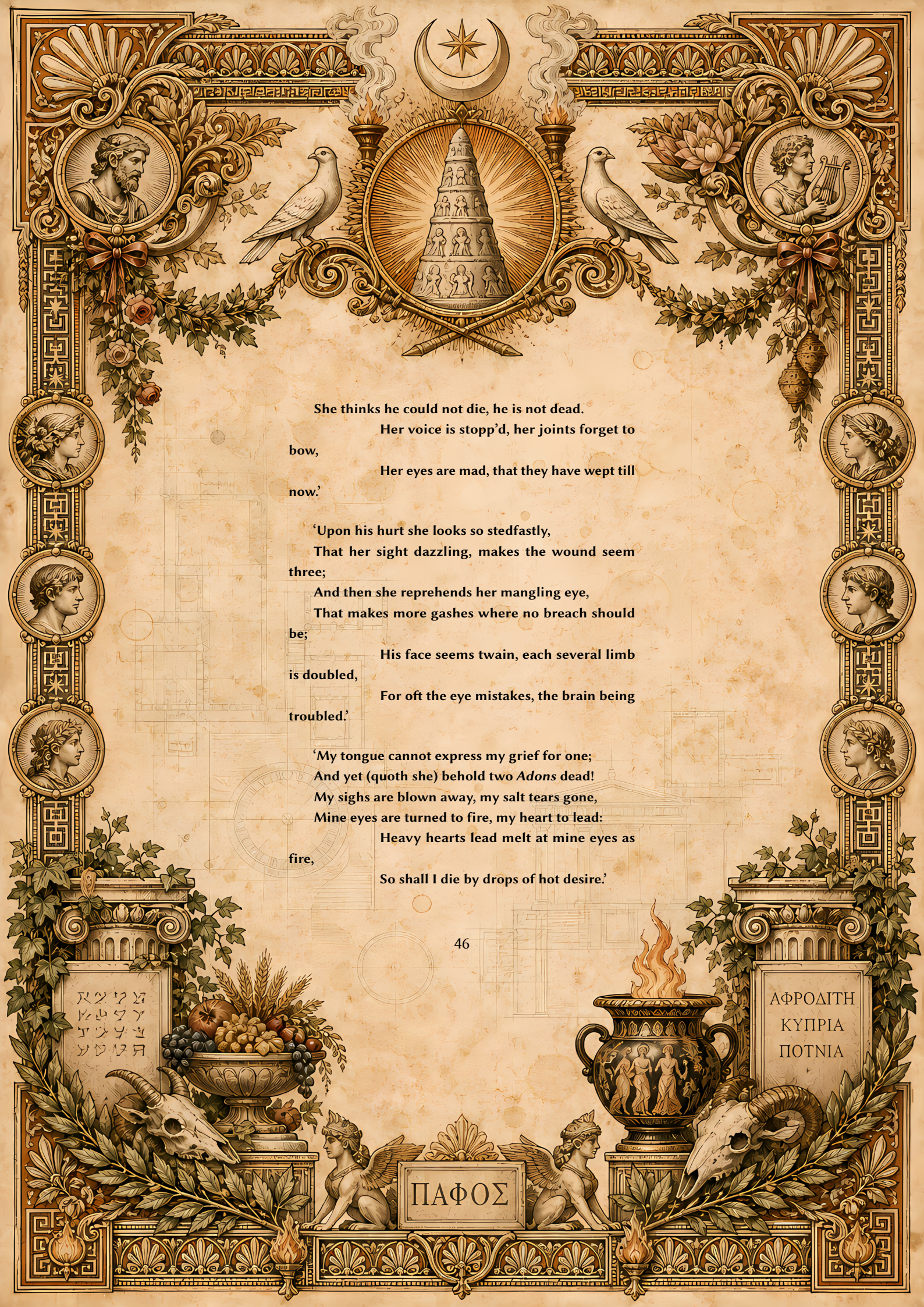


And never wound the heart with looks again:
Who like a king perplexed in his throne,
By their suggestions gives a deadly groan.'

'Whereat each tributary subject quakes,
As when the wind, imprison'd in the ground,
Struggling for passage, earth's foundation shakes,
Which with cold terrors doth men's minds confound.
This mutiny each part doth so surprise,
That from their dark beds, once more, leap her eyes.'

'And, being open'd, threw unwilling sight
Upon the wide wound, that the boar had trench'd
In his soft flank; whose wonted lilly white
With purple tears, that his wound wept, was drench'd.
No flower was nigh, no grass, herb, leaf, or weed,
But stole his blood, and seem'd with him to bleed.'

'This solemn sympathy poor *Venus* noteth,
Over one shoulder doth she hang her head:
Dumbly she passions, frantickly she doteth;



She thinks he could not die, he is not dead.
Her voice is stopp'd, her joints forget to bow,
Her eyes are mad, that they have wept till now.'

'Upon his hurt she looks so stedfastly,
That her sight dazzling, makes the wound seem three;
And then she reprehends her mangling eye,
That makes more gashes where no breach should be;
His face seems twain, each several limb is doubled,
For oft the eye mistakes, the brain being troubled.'

'My tongue cannot express my grief for one;
And yet (quoth she) behold two *Adons* dead!
My sighs are blown away, my salt tears gone,
Mine eyes are turned to fire, my heart to lead:
Heavy hearts lead melt at mine eyes as fire,
So shall I die by drops of hot desire.'

‘Alas! poor world, what treasure hast thou lost!
What face remains alive that’s worth the viewing?
Whose tongue is musick now? what canst thou boast
Of things long since, or any thing ensuing?
The flowers are sweet, their colours fresh and trim,
But true sweet beauty liv’d and dy’d in him.’

‘Bonnet, or veil, henceforth no creature wear;
Nor sun, nor wind will ever strive to kiss you:
Having no fair to lose, you need not fear;
The sun doth scorn you, and the wind doth hiss you.
But when *Adonis* liv’d, sun and sharp air
Lurk’d like two thieves, to rob him of his fair.’

‘And therefore wou’d he put his bonnet on,
Under whose brim the gaudy sun wou’d peep;
The wind wou’d blow it off, and being gone,
Play with his locks, then wou’d *Adonis* weep:
And straight, in pity of his tender years,
They both wou’d strive who first shou’d dry his tears.’

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‘To see his face, the lion walks along
Behind some hedge, because he wou’d not fear him;
To recreate himself when he hath sung,
The tyger wou’d be tame, and gently hear him:
If he had spoke, the wolf wou’d leave his prey,
And never fright the silly lamb that day.’

‘When he beheld his shadow in a brook,
There fishes spread on it their golden gills:
When he was by, the birds such pleasure took,
That some would sing, some other in their bills
Would bring him mulberries, and ripe red cherries;
He fed them with his sight, they him with berries.’

The goddess continues her lamentation; and with a conceit not altogether in keeping with the spirit of Greek poetry, imagines the wild beast to have become enamoured of the beautiful form of Adonis, and to have rushed upon him to kiss him. Pursuing this idea she says:—

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‘ ’Tis true, true, true, thus was *Adonis* slain,
He ran upon the boar with his sharp spear,
Who wou’d not whet his teeth at him again,
But by a kiss thought to persuade him there:
And nousling in his flank, the loving swine
Sheath’d unaware his tusk in his soft groin.’

‘Had I been tooth’d like him, I must confess,
With kissing him, I shou’d have kill’d him first.
But he is dead, and never did he bless
My mouth with his; the more am I accurs’d.
With this she falleth in the place she stood,
And stains her face with his congealed blood.’

‘She looks upon his lips, and they are pale;
She takes him by the hand, and that is cold;
She whispers in his ear a heavy tale,
As if he heard the woful words she told:
She lifts the coffer-lids that close his eyes,
Where, lo! two lamps burnt out in dark-ness lies.’

‘Two glasses, where herself herself beheld
A thousand times, and now no more reflect;
Their virtue lost, wherein they late excel’d,
And every beauty rob’d of his effect.
Wonder of time! (quoth she) this is my spight,
That, you being dead, the day shou’d yet be light.’

‘Since thou art dead, lo! here I prophesy
Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend;
It shall be waited on with jealousy,
Find sweet beginning, but unsavoury end,
Ne’er settled equally to high or low;
That all love’s pleasures shall not match his woe.’

‘It shall be fickle, false, and full of fraud,
And shall be blasted in a breathing while,
The bottom poison, and the top o’er-straw’d
With sweets, that shall the sharpest sight beguile.
The strongest body shall it make most weak,
Strike the wise dumb, and teach the fool to speak.’

‘It shall be sparing, and too full of riot,
Teaching decrepit age to tread the measures;
The staring ruffian shall it keep in quiet,
Pluck down the rich, inrich the poor with treasures;
It shall be raging mad, and silly mild,
Make the young old, the old become a child.’

‘It shall suspect where is no cause of fear;
It shall not fear, where it should most mistrust;
It shall be merciful and too severe,
And most deceiving when it seems most just:
Perverse, it shall be when it seems most toward,
Put fear to valour, courage to the coward.’

‘It shall be cause of war and dire events,
And set dissention ’twixt the son and sire;
Subject and servile to all discontents,
As dry combustious matter is to fire.
Sith, in his prime, death doth my love destroy,
They that love best their love shall not enjoy.’

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‘By this the boy that by her side lay kill’d,
Was melted like a vapour from her sight,
And in his blood, that on the ground lay spill’d,
A purple flower sprung up chequer’d with white,
Resembling well his pale cheeks and the blood,
Which in round drops upon their whiteness stood.’

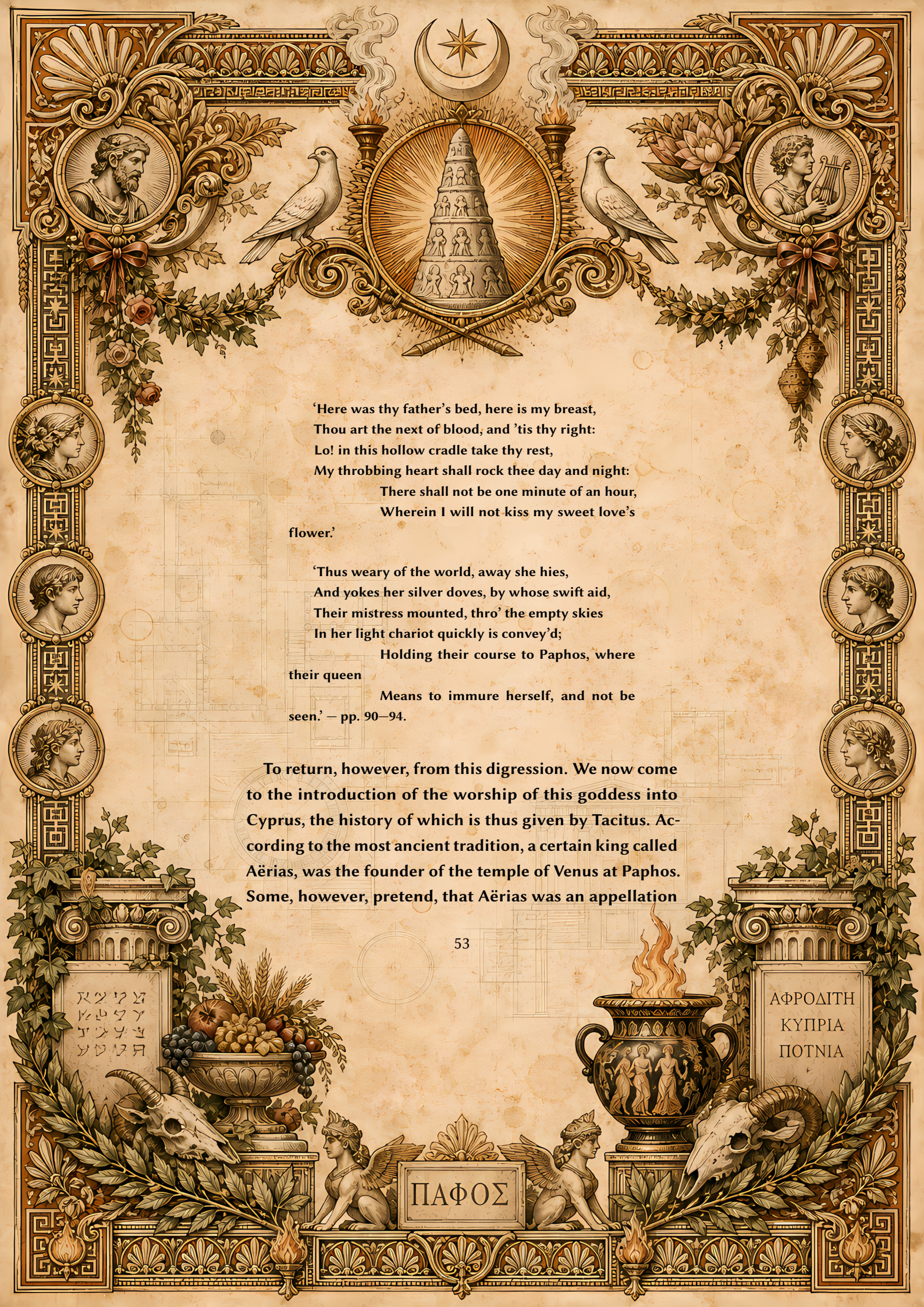
‘She bows her head the new-sprung flower to smell,
Comparing it to her *Adonis*’ breath:
And says, within her bosom it shall dwell,
Since he himself is reft from her by death:
She crops the stalk, and in the breach appears
Green dropping sap, which she compares to tears.’

‘Poor flower! (quoth she) this was thy father’s guise,
(Sweet issue of a more sweet-smelling sire)
For every little grief to wet his eyes,
To grow unto himself was his desire,
And so ’tis thine; but know it is as good
To wither in my breast, as in his blood.’

‘Here was thy father’s bed, here is my breast,
Thou art the next of blood, and ’tis thy right:
Lo! in this hollow cradle take thy rest,
My throbbing heart shall rock thee day and night:
There shall not be one minute of an hour,
Wherein I will not kiss my sweet love’s flower.’

‘Thus weary of the world, away she hies,
And yokes her silver doves, by whose swift aid,
Their mistress mounted, thro’ the empty skies
In her light chariot quickly is convey’d;
Holding their course to Paphos, where their queen
Means to immure herself, and not be seen.’ — pp. 90—94.

To return, however, from this digression. We now come to the introduction of the worship of this goddess into Cyprus, the history of which is thus given by Tacitus. According to the most ancient tradition, a certain king called Aërias, was the founder of the temple of Venus at Paphos. Some, however, pretend, that Aërias was an appellation



of the goddess herself. According to a more modern opinion, the temple was consecrated by Cinyras, on the very spot where Venus first landed when she sprang from the sea. It is added that the science of the Haruspices and all the secrets of their art, were brought hither from foreign countries, by Tamiras, the Cilician, and that it was decreed that the descendants of these two families should prescribe in concert over everything that related to public worship. In a short time, however, in order that the royal family might in all respects be superior to the foreign race, the strangers renounced the science which they had introduced, and from that time forward, the priest consulted has always been a descendant of Cinyras. The male of all kinds of animals is offered up as a victim to the goddess; but in looking into the future, the entrails of goats are always preferred. It is prohibited to stain the altars with blood; prayers and a pure flame alone are offered upon them, and these altars, although in the open air, are never moistened by rain. The goddess is not represented under the human form; the image is a circular block of stone,

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which, rising in the form of a cone, diminishes gradually from the base to the summit. The reason of this form is unknown.

In his learned and curious dissertation, or *Excursus*, as he terms it, on this passage, Mr. Guigniaut confirms an opinion which we had previously entertained, respecting this ancient statue. He supposes it to be the symbol adored in Hindoostan, by the worshippers of Siva; but, in this instance, joined with the corresponding symbol, which, though admitted into the apparatus of several ancient religions, has always been covered by a thicker veil. He observes, that the Greeks, who were much addicted to borrowing foreign myths, or fables, and mixing them with their national legends, had, in the worship of Venus, adhered more closely than usual to their own traditions. Cinyras, the founder of the temple, and a descendant in the sixth degree from Cephalus and Aurora, was the grandson of Cecrops, first king of Attica. From this tradition, it is inferred that Paphos, as well as several other cities of Cyprus, was founded by Athenian colonists, after

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the siege of Troy. A portion of the population of Cyprus, according to Herodotus, was of African origin, having come into the island from Ethiopia, or more probably from Egypt. Mr. Creuzer, indeed, discovers an Egyptian in Aërias, and observes, that the ancient name of this country, about which so much uncertainty, and so many fables prevail, was Aëria. Mr. Guigniaut, however, with whom, on this occasion, we are much more disposed to agree, thinks that the name of Aërias, or Aëria, attributed by many to the goddess herself, has a natural affinity with that of *Aous*,[66] first king of the country, who is, in fact, no other than Tithon, or Phaeton, and means, *child of Aurora*. Possibly, also, Cinyras and Adonis may be only one and the same person under different names; in which case, we should have here a striking example of a phenomenon by no means rare in the religions of antiquity, in which the God, the object of adoration, is also represented as the institutor of his own worship, as the first king and the

[66] Aous was also a river of Chaonia. Palmer à Grentemenil. Ant. Græc. Descrip. p. 144.

first priest. In the first place, Adonis reigned in Cyprus, as well as Cinyras. The latter, on the other hand, was a native of Byblos, in Phœnicia, a city renowned for the worship of Adonis, or Thammuz, a deity purely Phœnician: he had erected a temple to Venus on mount Libanus, and, pursuing the genealogical thread with which we are now engaged, Adonis was his son, by a daughter of Pygmalion, king of Phœnicia. Now, the name of the latter was Gingras, the name also of a peculiar kind of flute used in Phœnicia to express mourning; and the name of Cinyras, which is not at all unlike that of Gingras, while it expressed tears and mourning, was also applied to an instrument of music. Let us add, that Adonis, the unfortunate lover of Venus, was known at Lacedemon under the name of Ciris, or Cyris, an appellation which might be derived from χυριος and would in that case be merely a translation of the Phœnician Adonai, or Lord. It may be added that Cinyras and his descendants were said to be buried in the temple at Paphos, and that Venus herself was also interred in the same spot, beside her lover, evi-

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dently confounded with Adonis. Milton, who had looked with a curious eye into the fables of antiquity, represents Astarte as the moon, in the following beautiful passage —

“ — With those in troop
Came Ashtoreth, whom the Phœnicians called
Astarte, Queen of Heaven, with crescent horns:
To whose bright image nightly by the moon,
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs,
In Sion also not unsury, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built,
By that uxorious King, whose heart tho’ large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate,
In amorous ditties all a summer’s day.
While smooth Adonis from his native rock,
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion’s daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries

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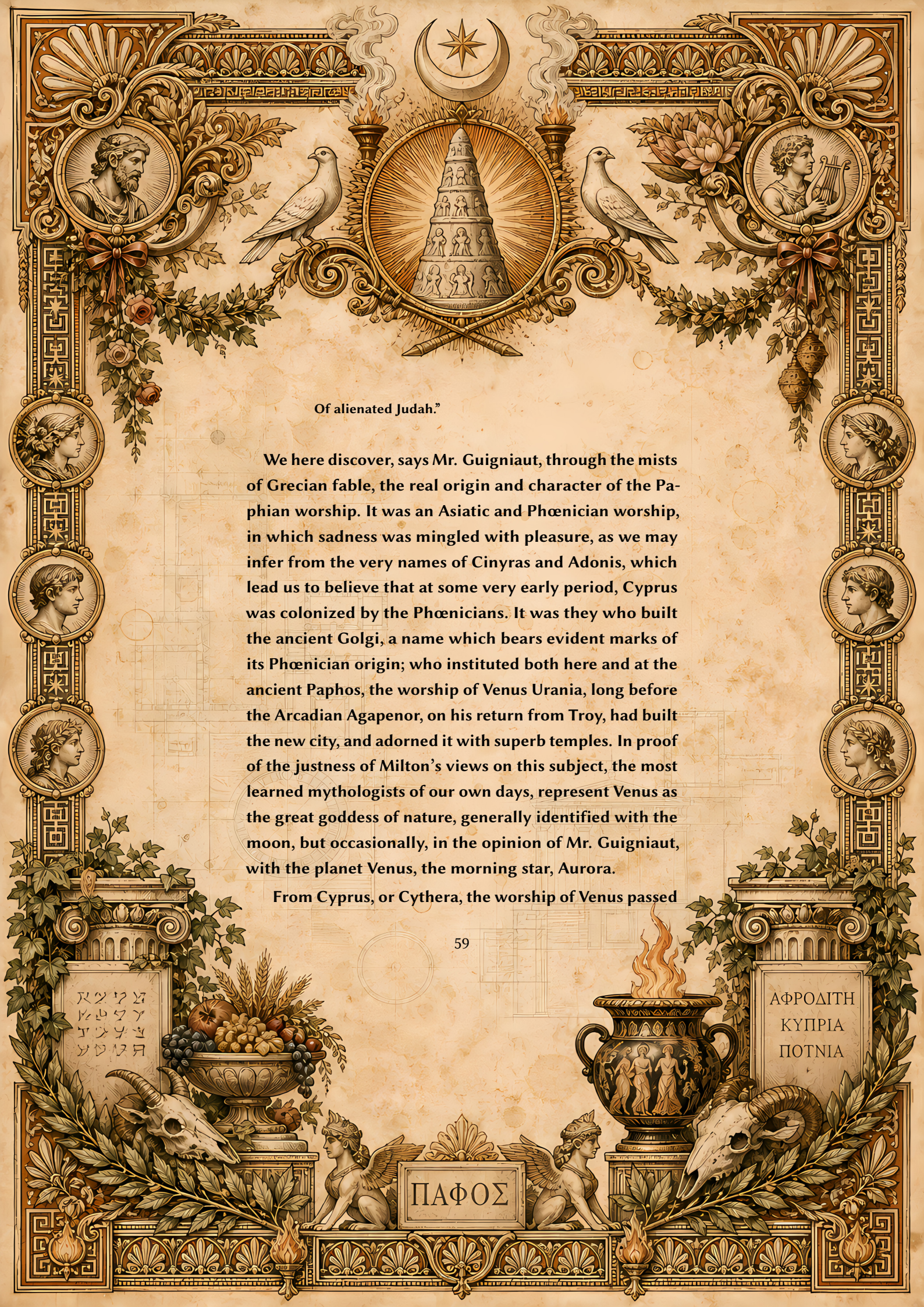
Of alienated Judah."

We here discover, says Mr. Guigniaut, through the mists of Grecian fable, the real origin and character of the Paphian worship. It was an Asiatic and Phœnician worship, in which sadness was mingled with pleasure, as we may infer from the very names of Cinyras and Adonis, which lead us to believe that at some very early period, Cyprus was colonized by the Phœnicians. It was they who built the ancient Golgi, a name which bears evident marks of its Phœnician origin; who instituted both here and at the ancient Paphos, the worship of Venus Urania, long before the Arcadian Agapenor, on his return from Troy, had built the new city, and adorned it with superb temples. In proof of the justness of Milton's views on this subject, the most learned mythologists of our own days, represent Venus as the great goddess of nature, generally identified with the moon, but occasionally, in the opinion of Mr. Guigniaut, with the planet Venus, the morning star, Aurora.

From Cyprus, or Cythera, the worship of Venus passed



into the Peloponnesus and the other parts of Greece, where it was soon confounded with that of the ancient national goddess, Aphrodite. This is the ordinary way of tracing the history of this worship. But if the Greeks had already an Aphrodite, a goddess embodying the principle of beauty, and presiding over the empire of love, wherefore borrow the Astarte of the Orientals, and mingle up a coarser and more material fable with their own exquisite legend? We cannot, for our part, discover the grounds upon which mythologists build up this specious theory, and are rather disposed to believe that although the Greeks may have naturalized some of the fables of the Orientals, the original type of the goddess existed among them previous to all communication with the East. Before we pass, however, from Cyprus to the continent, we will present the reader with a short description of the temple of Venus, at Cyprus:—

— "With speed the two immortals came
To the grand mansion of the Cyprian dame,
Which crippled Vulcan raised, when first he led

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The Paphian goddess to his nuptial bed.
The gate they pass, and to the dome retire,
Where Venus oft regales the god of fire:
He to his forge had gone at early day,
A floating isle contained it on the bay,
Here wond'rous works by fire's fierce power he wrought,
And on his anvil to perfection brought.
Fronting the door, all lovely and alone,
Sat Cythera on a polished throne.
Adown the shoulders of the heavenly fair
In easy ringlets flowed her yellow hair;
And with a golden comb, in matchless grace,
She taught each lock its most becoming place."

Being thus introduced to the goddess and her dwelling by one poet, Apollonius Rhodius, we shall proceed to borrow from another an account of the site and appearance of this palace. It was situated, says Claudian, on the eastern side of the island, on a lofty mountain, inaccessible to men. The rigour of winter, the burning heats of summer, are never felt upon this mountain; the winds fear

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to approach it; and a perpetual spring prevails there. A spacious plain occupies the summit, and is enclosed by a wall of gold, which prohibits the entrance of mortals. Flowers of eternal beauty spring up spontaneously, and their exquisite scents are carried hither and thither by the zephyrs. In a dark wood, which stands on one part of the plain, birds of the most lovely notes sing perpetually. Even the very trees are here capable of love, and entertain and are the objects of tender sentiments. The palm tree bends oyer its beloved; poplar sighs for poplar; plane for plane; and a soft murmur pervades the wood. Two fountains flow from this spot: the one sweet, the other so bitter that even honey is rendered disagreeable when mingled with its waters. In these fountains Cupid, it is said, dips his arrows. A thousand little loves, with their quivers on their shoulders, sport upon the banks. These little deities are all brethren, and resemble each other. They are the children of the nymphs. Cupid alone is the son of Venus. It is he, who, with his bow in his hand, rules over both heaven and earth; it is he who wounds princes

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with his arrows, while the other Loves shoot their darts at inferior persons. In those lovely regions reign liberty, the placable anger of lovers, vigils steeped in wine, tears unshed, the sweet paleness of lovers, their timid boldness, agreeable fears, and insecure pleasures. Broken vows flit about upon their light wings, and proud, self-confiding youth forbids age to enter the grove. The palace of the goddess reflects the rays of the sun in a thousand ways; it is constructed of gold and jewels with the greatest art; its beams are of emerald, its pillars of jacinth, its walls of beryl, its threshold of jasper, and its floors of agate. The atmosphere is filled with all the perfumes of Arabia. The Graces stand at the side of the goddess, and while one of them pours out the nectar, the other two adjust her ringlets in an easy negligent manner, which enchants the eye.

Entering the Peloponnesus we find at Lacedemon, a round temple dedicated to Olympian Jupiter and Venus. Another temple in the same city was sacred to the worship of Venus-Juno. At Megalopolis, in Arcadia, at Tegea, at

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Olympia, were temples dedicated to this goddess; and at Elis, near the forum, and behind the portico erected from the spoils of the Corcyreans, there was also a temple of Venus, with a small estate belonging to it. The statue of the goddess, formed of gold and ivory by Phidias, stood with one foot upon a tortoise, to signify, says Plutarch, that married women should remain at home and be silent. At Sicyon the worship of Venus was conducted in a very extraordinary manner. To cast a kind of mystery around the rites, no person was permitted to enter the temple but the sacristan and priestess, who, while they officiated in the temple, were compelled to lead a life of rigid chastity. The worshippers were constrained to kneel on the threshold of the temple, and from thence offer their vows to the unseen deity within. A very learned writer supposes that this custom was derived from Egypt, where, from the melancholy character of the people, it was thought that fasting and abstaining even from lawful pleasures were agreeable to heaven.

Venus had several temples at Athens. In the quarter

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of the city called “the gardens,” there was a temple, near which the goddess was represented by a quadrangular stone, with an inscription engraven upon it, in which Venus was said to be more ancient than the Fates. Above the Ceramicus was another temple to Venus, containing a statue from the hand of Phidias. One of the temples of this goddess was dedicated to her under the name of Venus Psithyros, or the whisperer, because the women who addressed their vows to her, whispered in the ear of the statue. Upon this practice Seneca remarks, — “Turpissima vota diis insusurrunt, si quis ad moverit auem, conticescent, et quod scire hominem nolunt, des narrant.” One of the three parts of the Piræeus was called Aphrodisium, and probably derived its name from the temple erected there by Conon, in memory of the victory obtained over the Lacedemonians, near Cnidos in Caria.

The epithets of this goddess were numerous and significant; but we shall abstain from repeating them. From her temple, however, on mount Eryx in Sicily, she obtained the epithet *Erycina*, which occurs constantly in the works

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of the ancient poets. Mount Eryx is near the sea, between Drepanum and Panormus, in that part of Sicily which faces Italy. Upon the summit of this mountain, which is exceedingly steep, on the side of Drepanum, and, next to Etna, the highest in the whole island, was a small plain, which, according to tradition, was artificially enlarged, by Dædalus. Upon this plain stood the famous temple of Venus, overlooking the city of Drepanum, which was built on the slope of the mountain, where Trapani del Monte now stands. This temple was scarcely less rich than that of Paphos; and among its curiosities, which consisted of antique phials, crateras, censers, etc., was a honey-comb in gold, said to be the work of Dædalus. Diodorus of Sicily, who enlarges with complacency upon this great ornament of his native country, remarks, that no person could fail to admire the glory of this temple. Other fanes, says he, have acquired celebrity, but the revolutions of time have humbled or destroyed them. This temple alone, founded in the remotest antiquity, has gone on increasing in consideration to the present day. To say nothing of the

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devotion of Eryx, (a king who, according to some tradition, was founder of the temple), Æneas, landing in Sicily, on his way to Italy, adorned this temple with a number of offerings. The Sicanians continued to pay divine honours to the goddess during many generations, and perpetually adorned her temple with magnificent presents. When the Carthaginians made themselves masters of the island, they treated the goddess with particular marks of respect; and, to conclude, the Romans, having added Sicily to their empire, surpassed all their predecessors, in their veneration of the deity of this temple. This, however, was to be expected; for since they pretended to derive their origin from Venus, and had filled their city with temples, erected to her, to whom they thought their success in wars and peace was to be attributed, it was natural they should honour her temples, wherever they might be found. The consuls, the prætors, in one word, all the magistrates who come into this island, offer magnificent sacrifices, and pay extraordinary honours to the goddess; and as soon as they arrive at mount Eryx, lay aside all the insignia of

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power, in order to amuse themselves gaily and at their ease, with their mistresses, that they may thus render the goddess propitious. The Roman senate, with singular piety, have issued a decree, authorizing seventeen of the most faithful cities in Sicily, to wear gold in honour of the goddess, and to guard her temple with two hundred soldiers.

Both the inhabitants and strangers daily offered sacrifices to Venus, on the great altar of the temple, which was constructed in the open air. These sacrifices generally occupied the worshippers from morning until night, and must have produced large heaps of cinders, charcoal, etc., but Elian, with true Pagan credulity, informs us that nothing of all these was visible next morning, but that a heavy dew was upon the ground, and fresh grass which had sprang up during the night. To render matters still more astonishing, he adds that no force was necessary to bring the victims to the altar, but that the animals, pleased to be sacrificed to so beautiful a goddess, came of their own accord to the hand of the priest or sacrificer.

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The principal festival of this ancient divinity occurred in the spring, at which season she is thought to exercise the most powerful sway over both men and animals. The most beautiful and complete description of the mode in which the Eve of Venus was celebrated, is contained in the poem entitled "Pervigilium Veneris," attributed to Catullus. We give a portion of this poem, as translated by Archdeacon Parnell.

'She comes; to-morrow Beauty's Empress roves
Thro' walks that winding run within the groves;
She twines the shooting myrtle into bow'rs,
And ties their meeting tops with wreaths of flow'rs,
Then rais'd sublimely on her easy throne
From Nature's pow'rful dictates draws her own.
"Let those love now, who never lov'd before;
"Let those who always lov'd, now love the more."
'Twas on that day which saw the teeming flood
Swell round, impregnate with celestial blood;
Wand'ring in circles stood the sinny crew,
The midst was left a void expanse of blue,

There parent Ocean work'd with heaving throes,
And dropping wet the fair Dione rose.
"Let those love now, who never lov'd before;
"Let those who always lov'd, now love the more."
She paints the purple year with vary'd show,
Tips the green gem, and makes the blossom glow.
She makes the turgid buds receive the breeze,
Expand to leaves, and shade the naked trees.
When gath'ring damps the misty nights diffuse,
She sprinkles all the morn with balmy dews;
Bright trembling pearls depend at every spray,
And kept from falling, seem to fall away.
A glossy freshness hence the Rose receives,
And blushes sweet through all her silken leaves;
(The drops descending through the silent night,
While stars serenely roll their golden light,)
Close 'till the morn, her humid veil she holds;
Then deckt with virgin pomp the flow'r unfolds.
Soon will the morning blush: ye maids! prepare,
In rosy garlands bind your flowing hair;
'Tis Venus' plant: the blood fair Venus shed,
O'er the gay beauty pour'd immortal red;

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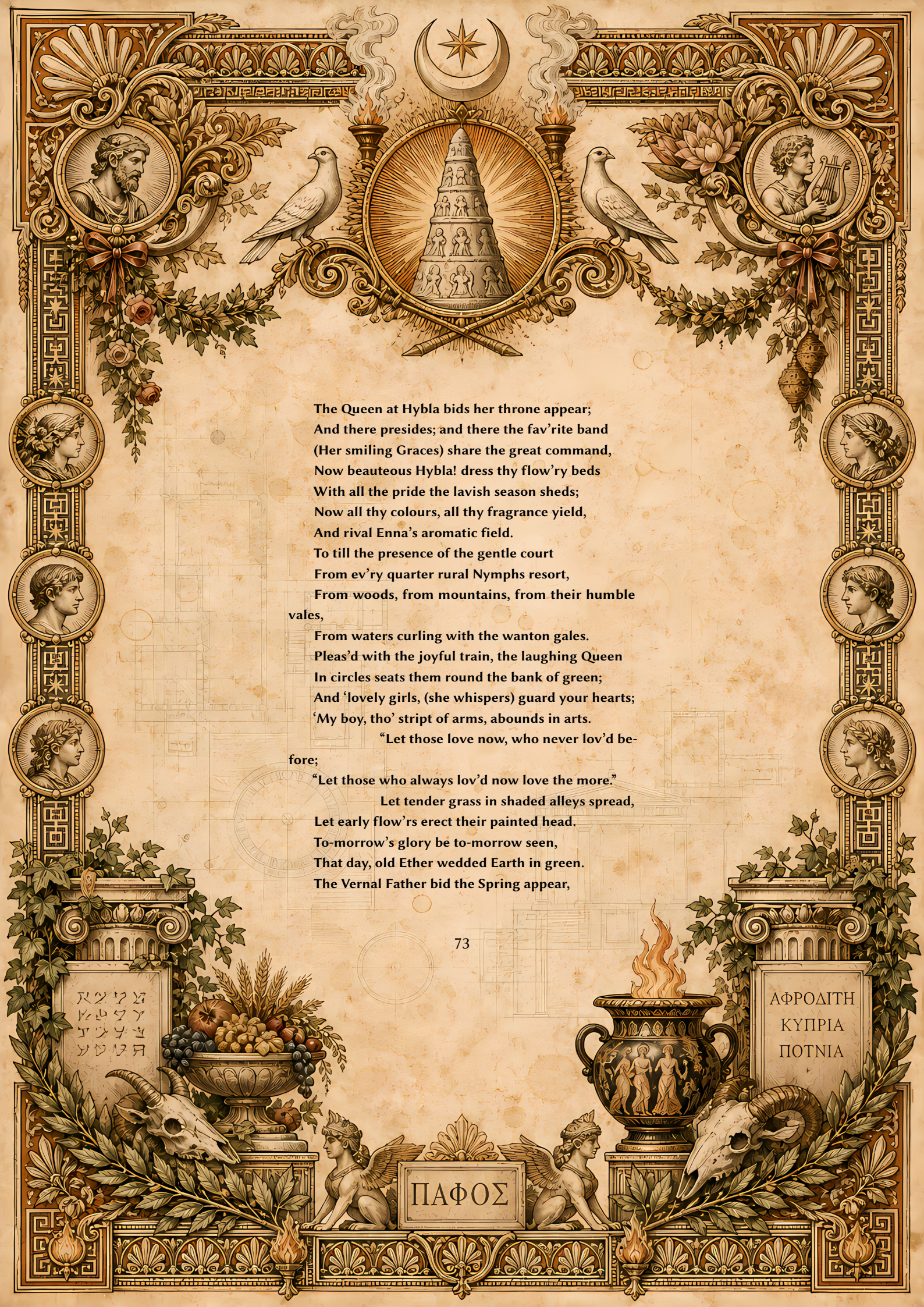
From Love's soft kiss a sweet Ambrosial smell
Was taught for ever on the leaves to dwell;
From gemms, from flames, from orient rays of light
The richest lustre makes her purple bright;
And she to-morrow weds; the sporting gale
Unties her zone, she bursts the verdant veil;
Thro' all her sweets the rifling lover flies,
And as he breathes, her glowing fires arise.
"Let those love now, who never lov'd before;
"Let those who always lov'd, now love the more."
Now fair Dione to the myrtle grove
Sends the gay nymphs, and sends her tender Love.
And shall they venture? is it safe to go?
While nymphs have hearts, and Cupid wears a bow?
Yes, safely venture, 'tis his mother's will;
He walks unarm'd, and undesigning ill,
His torch extinct, his quiver useless hung,
His arrows idle, and his bow unstrung.
And yet, ye Nymphs, beware, his eves have charms,
And Love that's naked, still is Love in arms.
' "Let those love now, who never lov'd before;
"Let those who always lov'd, now love the more."

ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ
ΚΥΠΡΙΑ
ΠΟΤΝΙΑ

ΠΑΦΟΣ

From Venus' bow'r to Delia's lodge re-
pairs
A virgin train compleat with modest airs:
'Chaste Delia! grant our suit! or shun the wood,
'Nor stain this sacred lawn with savage blood.
'Venus, O Delia! if she cou'd persuade,
'Wou'd ask thy presence, might she ask a maid.'
Here chearful quires for three auspicious nights
With songs prolong the pleasurable rites:
Here crouds in measures lightly-decent rove;
Or seek by pairs the covert of the grove,
Where meeting greens for arbours arch above,
And mingling flowrets strow the scenes of love.
Here dancing Ceres shakes her golden sheaves:
Here Bacchus revels, deckt with viny leaves:
Here wit's enchanting God in laurel crown'd
Wakes all the ravish'd Hours with silver sound.
Ye fields, ye forests, own Dione's reign,
And Delia, huntress Delia, shun the plain
"Let those love now, who never lov'd be-
fore;
"Let those who always lov'd, now love the more."
Gay with the bloom of all her opening
year,



The Queen at Hybla bids her throne appear;
And there presides; and there the fav'rite band
(Her smiling Graces) share the great command,
Now beauteous Hybla! dress thy flow'ry beds
With all the pride the lavish season sheds;
Now all thy colours, all thy fragrance yield,
And rival Enna's aromatic field.
To till the presence of the gentle court
From ev'ry quarter rural Nymphs resort,
From woods, from mountains, from their humble vales,
From waters curling with the wanton gales.
Pleas'd with the joyful train, the laughing Queen
In circles seats them round the bank of green;
And 'lovely girls, (she whispers) guard your hearts;
'My boy, tho' stript of arms, abounds in arts.
"Let those love now, who never lov'd before;
"Let those who always lov'd now love the more."
Let tender grass in shaded alleys spread,
Let early flow'rs erect their painted head.
To-morrow's glory be to-morrow seen,
That day, old Ether wedded Earth in green.
The Vernal Father bid the Spring appear,

ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ
ΚΥΠΡΙΑ
ΠΟΤΝΙΑ

ΠΑΦΟΣ

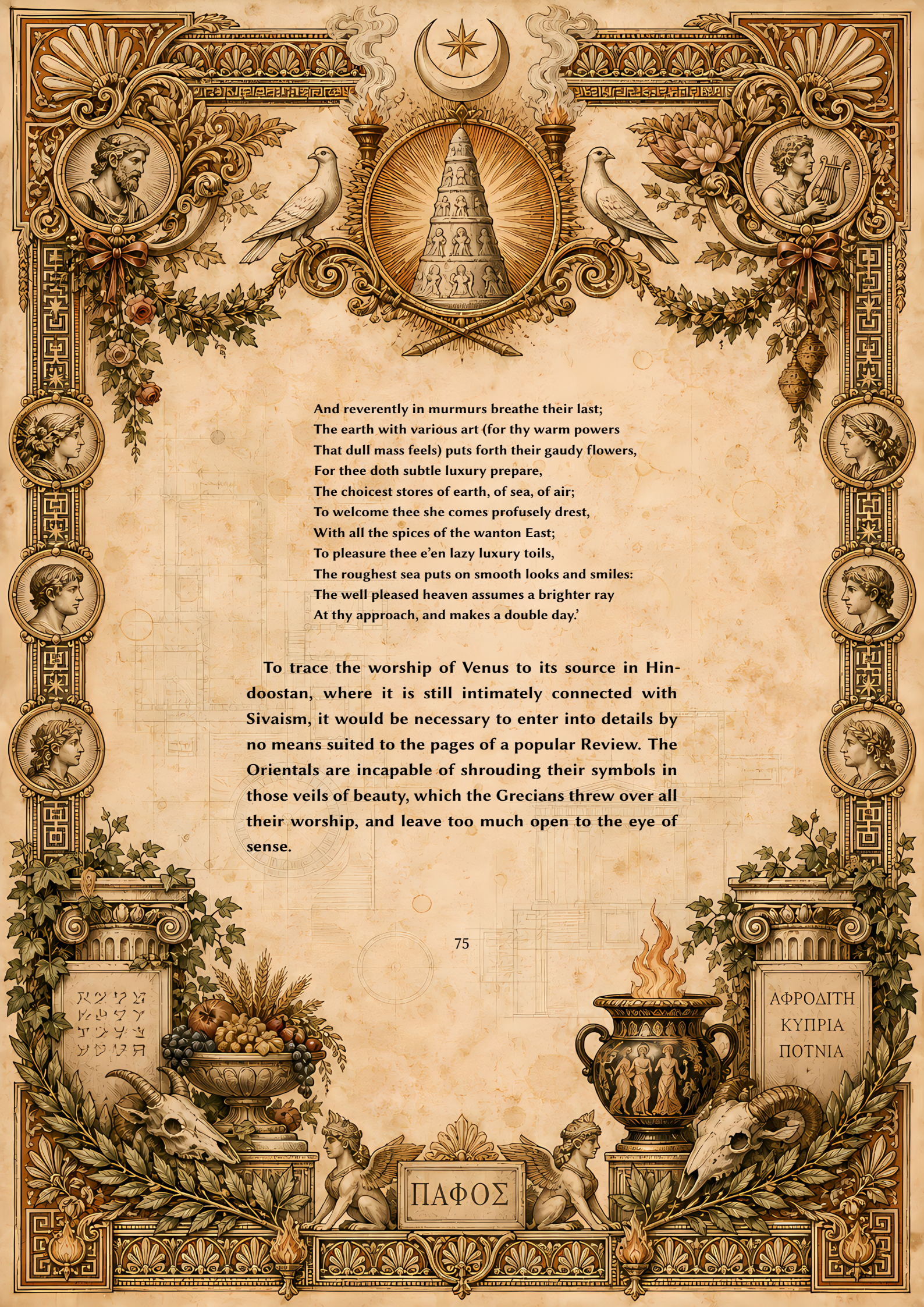
In clouds he coupled to produce the year,
The sap descending o'er her bosom ran,
And all the various sorts of soul began.
By wheels unknown to sight, by secret veins
Distilling life, the fruitful Goddess reigns,
Through all the lovely realms of native day,
Through all the circled land, and circling sea;
With fertil seed she fill'd the pervious earth,
And ever fix'd the mystic ways of birth.' — pp. 30—36.

The light in which the goddess appeared to those among the Pagans, who were disposed to give a physical interpretation of their fables, may be conjectured from the beautiful invocation of Lucretius, thus translated by Creech:

'Kind Venus, glory of the best abodes,
Parent of Rome, and joy of men and gods;
Delight of all, comfort of sea and earth;
To whose kind powers all creatures owe their birth.
At thy approach, great goddess, straight remove
Whate'er are rough, and enemies to love;
The clouds disperse, the winds do swiftly mast,

ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ
ΚΥΠΡΙΑ
ΠΟΤΝΙΑ

ΠΑΦΟΣ



And reverently in murmurs breathe their last;
The earth with various art (for thy warm powers
That dull mass feels) puts forth their gaudy flowers,
For thee doth subtle luxury prepare,
The choicest stores of earth, of sea, of air;
To welcome thee she comes profusely drest,
With all the spices of the wanton East;
To pleasure thee e'en lazy luxury toils,
The roughest sea puts on smooth looks and smiles:
The well pleased heaven assumes a brighter ray
At thy approach, and makes a double day.'

To trace the worship of Venus to its source in Hindoostan, where it is still intimately connected with Sivaism, it would be necessary to enter into details by no means suited to the pages of a popular Review. The Orientals are incapable of shrouding their symbols in those veils of beauty, which the Grecians threw over all their worship, and leave too much open to the eye of sense.